THE COLLECTED WORKS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

XXIII

(March 1922 - May 1924)



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PREFACE

This volume covers the period March 4, 1922 to May 1924. Nearly two years of this Gandhiji spent in Yeravda Jail, serving his first term of imprisonment in India. In this interval, a schism developed in the Congress on the issue of Council-entry and the relations of Hindus and Muslims became strained in several parts, so that when Gandhiji was prematurely released in February 1924, after an emergency operation for appendicitis, he found the political situation and the general atmosphere in the country more discouraging even than at the time of his arrest. The imprisonment, however, gave his mind and body an opportunity for rest, which he employed in study and reflection; he soon overcame the mental agitation of the months preceding his arrest and regained his accustomed peace and serenity.

In early March 1922, Gandhiji had not only anticipated his arrest, but almost welcomed it with a sense of relief. "I have," he tells T. Prakasam in a letter dated March 7, 1922, "persistent rumours . . . thrust upon me that my leave is more than over-due, and I am also told that I shall be relieved of my burdens inside of 7 days" (p. 21). Writing to C. F. Andrews after the arrest, he says, "At last I am having a quiet time. It was bound to come" (p. 93). And, again, to Mathuradas Trikumji, "I enjoy boundless peace" (p. 94). It was not so much the strain of unremitting physical activity as the burden of making correct decisions in a situation which seemed to be getting beyond control that probably taxed the inner resources of Gandhiji. The outburst of violence in several parts of the country despite his earnest and repeated appeals for peace had disturbed him profoundly. At the time of his trial, he readily accepted responsibility for them. "Thinking over these deeply and sleeping over them night after night," he told the Judge, "it is impossible to dissociate myself from the diabolical crimes of Chauri Chaura or the mad outrages in Bombay and Madras" (p. 114). But his grief over the madness of the people was matched by his intense indignation at the misdeeds of the Government. As he explained to the Judge, he had to make his choice. "I had either to submit to a system which I considered had done an irreparable harm to my country, or incur the risk of the mad fury of my people bursting forth when they understood the truth from my lips" (p. 114). He concluded the remarks with which he prefaced his written statement, saying: ". . . by the time I have finished with

my statement, you will, perhaps, have a glimpse of what is raging within my breast to run this maddest risk that a sane man can run" (p. 115). He felt profoundly humbled to see that his fears were realized. "I have now a more vivid sense of Truth and of my own littleness than I had a year ago" (p. 97).

But Gandhiji was by no means defeated. Following the mob violence at Chauri Chaura in early February, the contemplated mass civil disobedience in Bardoli taluka was indefinitely suspended, and the chief task now, as Gandhiji saw it, was to concentrate attention on the items of constructive work in the Non-co-operation programme and so create the necessary atmosphere for civil disobedience. In letters and articles, he appealed to the people to preserve complete peace in case he was arrested and urged upon all to carry on the constructive programme with zeal during his imprisonment. He especially addressed himself to critics of the Bardoli resolutions by which the Working Committee had suspended mass civil disobedience, and pleaded with them for unreserved acceptance of the implications of non-violence adopted even as mere policy. "Our non-violence," he said, "need not be of the strong, but it *has* to be of the truthful" (p. 25).

The trial was an opportunity to challenge the moral justification of British rule, and Gandhiji did that with emphasis and force. In a written statement, he explained why "from a staunch loyalist and co-operator, I have become an uncompromising disaffectionist and non-co-operator" (p. 115). Though he discovered early in South Africa that he had no rights as a man because he was an Indian (p. 115), he had thought that this was an excrescence upon a system that was intrinsically and mainly good. He acted upon that faith for more than twenty-five years of public life. The first shock came in 1919 in the shape of the Rowlatt Act, and the official condonation of the Jallianwala Bagh shooting, coupled with the Imperial Government's breach of promise to the Muslims of India on the Khilafat issue, completely destroyed Gandhiji's faith in the *bona fides* of the British Government. Forced to think of the British connection in the light of this experience, he reluctantly came to the conclusion that it "had made India more helpless than she ever was before, politically and economically. . . . I have no doubt whatsoever," he declared, "that both England and the town-dwellers of India will have to answer, if there is a God above, for this crime against humanity which is perhaps unequalled in history" (p. 117). He had no ill will, he said, against any individual administrator, "but I hold it to be a virtue to be disaffected towards a Government which in its totality has done more harm to India than any

previous system" (p. 118). He ended with an appeal to the conscience of the Judge: "The only course open to you, the Judge, is either to resign your post and thus dissociate yourself from evil, if you feel that the law you are called upon to administer is an evil and that in reality I am innocent; or to inflict on me the severest penalty if you believe that the system and the law you are assisting to administer are good for the people of this country and that my activity is, therefore, injurious to the public weal" (p. 119).

In jail, Gandhiji continued his fight against the system on a different plane. He readily submitted to the normal rules of jail life, but protested against every act of the authorities which he thought violated his rights as a prisoner or which was in disregard of human considerations. The very first letter he wrote from the Yeravda Prison, one addressed to Hakim Ajmal Khan, was withheld by the Government, and in protest Gandhiji intimated to the authorities his decision not to exercise his privilege as a prisoner to write letters at permitted intervals. The journals and periodicals of his choice were also refused to him and Gandhiji wrote to the Jail Superintendent that he regarded such refusals as "a punishment in addition to that awarded by the convicting judge" (p. 162). And he added: "But, rightly or wrongly, I believe that even as a prisoner I have certain rights . . . I ask for no favours, and if the Inspector-General thinks that any single thing or convenience has been given to me as a favour, let it be withdrawn" (p. 162). On the issue of visitors, the conduct of the authorities hurt Gandhiji more deeply. Applications for visits were not treated with due consideration, so much so that Gandhiji felt compelled to protest: ". . . I ought to know whom I may or may not see, so as to avoid disappointment or even possible humiliation". And "I entertain ideas of honour and self-respect which I would like the Government, if they can, to understand and appreciate". Concluding the letter, he said: "I would urge the Government to let me have an early, straight and undiplomatic reply" (p. 160).

Gandhiji had also occasion to enter into correspondence with the authorities on other issues and appeal to them to take a more enlightened view of jail administration. He wanted the special division facilities enjoyed by him as a prisoner to be extended to other political prisoners sentenced to rigorous imprisonment, and asked that a fellow-prisoner, Abdul Gani, be permitted the diet of his choice in the same manner that he was. But it was on behalf of the Mulshi Peta prisoners that he made, on humanitarian grounds, the most earnest intervention in the administration of the jail. He wanted permission to meet and persuade them to submit themselves

to jail discipline and not force the authorities to resort to flogging as a penalty for breach of it. Gandhiji hinted in one of his letters that, in case he was not permitted to use his good offices to prevent the recurrence of flogging, he might have to undertake a fast. The Governor resented the threat, but yielded, and in this instance at any rate the outcome was happy.

Voluminous as this correspondence with the authorities was, it was certainly not Gandhiji's chief interest. He looked upon the enforced rest in prison mainly as an opportunity for reading and satisfying his intellectual hunger. The diaries he maintained in jail during 1922 and 1923 (pp. 144-53 & 178-88) contain a record of his reading which for range, pace and intensity would be the envy of even the most industrious student at a University. The list included, besides metaphysical and religious books, such unexpected works as Gibbon's *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Kipling's *The Five Nations*, *Barrack-room Ballads* and *The Second Jungle Book*, Jules Verne's *Dropped from the Clouds*, Macaulay's *Lays of Ancient Rome* and Shaw's *Man and Superman*.

Prison gave Gandhiji the opportunity to recall and set down *The History of Satyagraha in South Africa*. By the time he left jail, he had written some 30 chapters which were to appear serially in *Navajivan* and *Young India*.

However, the record of his reading and writing in jail should not lead one to believe that he lived the life of a recluse. With his spontaneous interest in all human beings and their affairs, he kept his eyes and ears open and observed jail life with an acuteness which enabled him, after his release, to write vivid reminiscences of his experience of the jail officials, of the convict officers in attendance upon him and of the general atmosphere in the prison.

What helps to complete the picture of a man ever concerned with others is the story of his serious illness necessitating surgical treatment. His whole attitude and deportment at this time, his "high-mindedness, forgiveness, chivalry and love transcending ordinary human nature" are well recorded by Srinivasa Sastri in a statement which also brings out the great leader's "serene vision and sensitiveness to honour" (p. 190).

Gandhiji was released on February 5, 1924. As he explained in "Answers to Drew Pearson's Questions" (pp. 195-8), his attitude to religion, politics and modern civilization was confirmed by reflection in solitude. But the country seemed, if anything, less responsive to his message in 1924 than it had been in 1920-21. Writing to Mahomed Ali on February 7, he said: "Though I

know very little of the present situation in the country, I know sufficient to enable me to see that, perplexing as the national problems were at the time of the Bardoli resolutions, they are far more perplexing today" (p. 200). The Hindu-Muslim unity forged during the Non-co-operation movement seemed to be in danger of dissolving under the shocks of frequent communal riots, and the very principle of non-co-operation was set aside by the Congress when it permitted its members to enter the Councils. These members, led by the veteran leaders Motilal Nehru and C. R. Das, had formed a new party, the Swaraj Party, within the Congress and were bitterly opposed by others who were described as No-changers. Gandhiji had too high a regard for the leaders of the Swaraj Party to force an open break with them, and he took long to study the situation before publicly expressing his opinion on their programme. When ultimately he did express it, he stated his disapproval of the Swarajist programme in the clearest terms saying that it had retarded the nation's progress towards swaraj and that the policy of obstruction had a strong smell of violence about it (pp. 414-8). But he accepted Council-entry as a settled fact, a necessary evil, and devoted his efforts to securing co-operation between the two camps in the Congress.

Other regional issues, too, claimed Gandhiji's attention soon after his release. These were the Vykom Satyagraha in Travancore for securing to the untouchable communities the right to use roads leading to a Hindu temple, and the Sikh agitation in the Punjab for reform of the Gurdwaras and opposing the action of the Government against the Nabha ruler. On these issues, however, Gandhiji found it easy to formulate and express his views in terms of the basic principles of satyagraha (pp. 229-35, 440-3 & 477-80).

Resuming the editorship of *Young India* and *Navajivan*, he took the first opportunity to reiterate the spiritual basis of his political activity. In the article "For the Readers Past and Present of *Young India*", 3-4-1924, he said: "I have no new programme. . . . I live for India's freedom and would die for it, because it is part of Truth. Only a free India can worship the true God . . . . But my patriotism is not exclusive; it is calculated not only not to hurt any other nation, but to benefit all in the true sense of the word" (p. 340). He was more categorical in another article, "My Mission", in the same issue: "My national service is part of my training for freeing my soul from the bondage of flesh. Thus considered, my service may be regarded as purely selfish. I have no desire for the perishable kingdom of earth. I am striving for the Kingdom of Heaven which is *moksha* . . . . So my patriotism is for

me a stage in my journey to the land of eternal freedom and peace. Thus it will be seen that for me there are no politics devoid of religion. They subserve religion. Politics bereft of religion are a death-trap because they kill the soul" (p. 349). And by religion he did not mean Hinduism, "but the religion which transcends Hinduism—the basic truth which underlies all the religions of the world" (p. 196). The table contrasting truth and untruth (pp. 147-8) and the extracts from Boehmen (pp. 150-1)—like the note on *moksha* and *swarga* (p. 359)—reveal the profundity of his meditation and his concern for tidiness in innermost as in outward living.

Writing to Esther Menon on her wedding (p. 23), he sums up in non-technical terms the traditional Hindu concept of dharma leading to *moksha*, of freedom rooted in responsibility. This faith in truth and in the variety of the aspects in which it appears to honest seekers remained the spiritual bedrock of his public activities throughout life. And he strikes the same note in a letter to a Christian friend in the Transvaal: "I have no axes to grind, no worldly ambition to serve. The only purpose of life is to see God face to face, and the more I see of life and its experiences, the more I feel that everyone does not receive the light in the same way . . ." (p. 267).

NOTE TO THE READER

In reproducing English material every endeavour has been made to adhere strictly to the original. Obvious typographical errors have been corrected and words abbreviated in the text generally spelt out. Variant spellings of names have, however, been retained as in the original.

Matter in square brackets has been supplied by the Editors. Quoted passages, have been set up in small type and printed with an indent. Where, however, Gandhiji has himself translated or summarized the passage, it is set up in the usual type. Indirect reports of speeches, interviews and passages which are not by Gandhiji have been set up in small type. In reports of speeches and interviews slight changes and omissions, where necessary, have been made in passages not attributed to Gandhiji.

While translating from Gujarati and Hindi, efforts have been made to achieve fidelity and also readability in English. Where English translations of these are available, they have been used with such changes as were necessary to bring them into conformity with the original.

The date of an item where available or could be inferred has been indicated at the top right-hand corner; if the original is undated, the inferred date is supplied within square brackets, with reasons where necessary. The date given at the end of an item alongside the source is that of publication.

References in footnotes to Volume I of this series are to the August 1958 edition. References to *An Autobiography or The Story of My Experiments with Truth* cite only the Part and the Chapter, in view of the varying pagination in different editions.

In the source-line, the symbol S.N. stands for documents available in Sabarmati Sangrahalaya, Ahmedabad, the letter 'M' after S.N. number indicates microfilm; G.N. refers to those available in the Gandhi Smarak Nidhi and Sangrahalaya, New Delhi; C.W. denotes documents secured by the Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi.

The Appendices provide background material relevant to the text. A list of sources and a chronology for the period covered by the Volume are also provided at the end.

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1. LETTER TO KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA[1]

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 4, 1922

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have kept your letter of the 19th February in order to be able to write to you at length.

Your first question is whether the requisite non-violent atmosphere can at all be attained and if so when. This is really a question as old as non-co-operation. It puzzles me to find some of the closest and most esteemed of co-workers putting the question as if the requirement was a new thing. I have not the shadow of a doubt that, if we can secure workers with an abiding faith in non-violence and in themselves, we can ensure the non-violent atmosphere required for the working of civil disobedience. The discovery I have made during these few days is that very few understand the nature of non-violence. The meaning of the adjective "civil" before "disobedience" is of course "non-violent". Why should the people not be trained to refrain from participating in activities which are likely to throw them off their balance? I agree that it will be difficult to get 30 crores of people to be non-violent, but I refuse to believe that it is difficult, if we can get intelligent and honest workers, to make people who are not actively participating in the movement remain indoors. Now, at Chauri Chaura[2] the procession was deliberately formed by volunteers. It was wickedly taken in the direction of the Thana. In my opinion, the forming of the procession itself was easily avoidable. Having been formed, it was the easiest thing to avoid passing the Thana. Two or three hundred volunteers are reported to have been in the procession. I hold that it was equally easy for this large number of volunteers to have effectively prevented the atrocious murder of the constables or at least for every one of them to have perished in the flames lit by the mob which they were

[1] President, Andhra Provincial Congress Committee

[2] A village in Gorakhpur district of Uttar Pradesh where on February 5, 1922, the mob set fire to the police station and 22 constables were burnt alive. Gandhiji was profoundly shocked by this and imposed on himself a five days' fast on February 12; *vide* Vol. XXII, pp. 415-21.

leading. I must not also omit to tell you that these men knew that trouble was brewing, knew that the Sub-Inspector was there, knew that there was collision between him and the people on two former occasions. Was not the Chauri Chaura tragedy absolutely capable of being avoided? I admit that nobody plotted the murder, but the volunteers should have foreseen the consequence of what they were doing. Of the Bombay tragedy I was myself a witness. The workers neglected the duty of telling the people, whilst they were preparing them about boycott, to remain tolerant, as also of posting volunteers in areas visited by the labouring population. I myself neglected the duty of putting down every insolent laying of hands upon other people's turbans and caps. Finally take Madras. Not one single incident which happened in Madras was unavoidable. I hold the Congress Committee responsible for all that happened in Madras. With the experience of Bombay fresh in their minds they could, even if they were not fully confident, have avoided hartal. The fact is in every case all the workers did not understand the full purpose of non-violence nor its implications. They liked and loved excitement, and underneath these vast demonstrations was an idea unconsciously lurking in the breast that it was a kind of demonstration of force, the very negation of non-violence. To follow out non-violence as a policy surely does not require saints for its working, but it does require honest workers who understand what is expected of them.

You say that the people work under the spell of one year's limit. There is much truth in what you say, but there again, if the people worked slowly under that spell, they were certainly not working for swaraj. I can understand some temporary excitement, but excitement must not be the whole thing, nor the main part of a great national activity. Swaraj after all is not a mango trick; it is a steady evolution, steady growing into strength such that a period must arrive when our strength has assumed such proportions as to tell upon the usurpers, but every moment of our activity we are gaining swaraj.

Certainly a peaceful Tehsil at the foot of the Himalayas will be affected by a violent hamlet situated near the Cape Comorin if there is a vital connection between the two, as there must be if they are both integral parts of India and your swaraj flag is to dominate both. At the same time, for mass civil disobedience in Bardoli, I would certainly have thought nothing of anything happening in an out-of-the-way Tehsil which had not come under the influence of the Congress and which had not resorted to vio-

lence in connection with any Congress activity. You cannot predicate any such want of connection about Gorakhpur, Bombay or Madras. Violence broke out in connection with a national activity. You have the forcible illustration of Malabar.[1] There it was organized and sustained violence offered by the Moplahs, and yet I did not allow Malabar to affect any of our plans, nor have I altered my views during all these months. I can still distinguish between Malabar and Gorakhpur. The Moplahs themselves had not been touched by the non-co-operation spirit. They are not like the other Indians nor even like the other Mussulmans. I am prepared to admit that the movement had an indirect effect upon them. The Moplah revolt was so different in kind that it did not affect the other parts of India, whereas Gorakhpur was typical, and therefore, if we had not taken energetic steps, the infection might easily have spread to the other parts of India.

You say that, individual civil disobedience being withdrawn, there will be no opportunity to test the temper of the people. We do not want to test the temper. On the contrary we want the people to become immersed in industries and constructive activities so that their temper is not exposed to the constant danger of being ruffled. A man wishing to gain self-control instead of exposing himself to temptations avoids them, though, at the same time, he is ready for them if they come to him unsought and in spite of his wanting to avoid them.

We certainly have not suspended any item of non-co-operation. This you will see clearly brought out in *Young India*. I am satisfied that our success depends upon our cultivating exemplary self-restraint and not disobeying even unseen orders of prohibition of meetings. We must learn to conduct our campaign in spite of prohibitions and without civil disobedience. If the people want excitement, we must refuse to give it to them even though we have to risk unpopularity and find ourselves in a hopeless minority. Even a few hundred chosen workers, scattered throughout the length and breadth of the country, stolidly following the programme will create a far more lasting impression than a haphazard mass movement undertaken in order to truckle to the multitude. I would like you therefore to become introspective and to find out for yourself the truth. If you still consider that there is a flaw in the reasoning I have put before you, I would like you to combat the position I have taken. I want us all to think originally and to arrive at independent conclusions. A drastic overhauling of

[1] *Vide* Vol. XXI, pp. 47-9.

ourselves and of the movement is absolutely necessary. I do not mind having finally to find out that non-violence is an impracticable dream. If such is our belief, it will be at least an honest belief. For me there is but one thing. I would love to contemplate the dreamland of non-violence in preference to the practicable reality of violence. I have burnt my boats, but that has nothing to do with any of my co-workers. The majority of them have come into the movement as a purely political movement. They do not share my religious beliefs, and I do not seek to thrust them upon them.

You must get better soon and, if necessary, you should come here to further discuss the matter.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA
GUNTUR

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 7977

2. *MY DISAPPOINTMENT*

I am not a quick despairer. I see rays of hope even in clouds of despair and I live on that food. But I must say the meeting[1] of the All-India Congress Committee this time disappointed me. If, as an optimist, I see light even where there is pitch darkness, it is because I force myself to do so.

If my view had not received a majority, I would certainly have seen signs of success. However, I feel crushed under the weight of majority opinion. I do not like shouts of victory; many times I have actually to plug my ears. With such shouts in their mouths, frenzied mobs killed people and burned down houses in Ahmedabad, Viramgam, Amritsar[2], Chauri Chaura and other places.

The All-India Congress Committee gave me a majority, but I could see that very few really liked the Bardoli resolutions.[3] I got the votes because I was Gandhi and not because people were

[1] Held at Delhi on February 24-25, 1922; at this meeting the resolution suspending mass civil disobedience but allowing individual satyagraha was adopted.

[2] In April 1919, during demonstrations against the Rowlatt Act, mobs had resorted to violence at Ahmedabad, Viramgam and Amritsar.

[3] The Working Committee of the Congress met at Bardoli on February 11 and 12. At Gandhiji's instance, it decided to cancel the programme of mass civil disobedience and to substitute a constructive programme of spinning, temperance, social reform and educational activities.

convinced. How can we put any value on them? When we are struggling to establish the rule of the people, of what avail is the victory of one individual? Truth and principle alone should triumph in such a case. A duel was going on between the heart and the head of the majority. The heart would incline towards me, while the head would run miles away from me. I felt, and still feel, unhappy at this.

How far will the wagon go, having thus to be pushed all the time? My soul testifies that, even if we do not accept non-violence in thought, word and deed, that is, even if we regard non-violence only as a matter of expediency, we should see, as clearly as we do the full moon, that after Chauri Chaura there can be nothing but the Bardoli resolutions.[1] And yet, if the Bardoli resolution has been confirmed [by the A.I.C.C.], it was not on its merits but for my sake. The sailors, who without knowing the directions continue to pilot their ship relying solely on their pilot, will see their ship sink if the latter happens to die or they lose faith in him. It would be dangerous to sail in a ship piloted by such men. Similarly, those who pass Congress resolutions without understanding them will see the ship of the Congress go down.

To me at any rate it is clear that, if we believe that we can win only through non-violence but combine the methods of non-violence and violence, the mixture will go sour and do us harm instead of good. Just as Bardoli's performance would have had an effect on the whole of India, Chauri Chaura, too, will have a similar effect. If we are in our right mind, we must see this. We cannot see both the sun and the moon in the sky at the same time. It cannot be so very cold while the sun shines. How long will a deliberate representing of sunlight as shade succeed? How long can we succeed in the game of making a traveller proceeding to the north believe that he is going southwards? How long can one hide the fact that, in the name of non-violence, violence is going on?

Even a policy adopted for practical reasons should be faithfully adhered to as long at least as the need for it remains. A policy adopted out of expediency, while it is being followed, should be followed whole-heartedly. Any person who promises to devote himself to work for five days should do so completely on those five days. He may love idleness, but he cannot say, after promising to work, that he has no faith in work and, therefore, will not work even on those five days. We would all say that, if he does not

[1] *Vide* Vol. XXI, pp. 411-4 and Vol. XXII, pp. 99-106 & 295-7.

believe in working even for five days, he should certainly stay out of a team of people who are ready to work.

Indians have decided that, without non-violence, their country's salvation is impossible as, without it, India cannot unite and the spinning-wheel programme will not succeed. Without Hindu-Muslim unity and without the spinning-wheel, India cannot advance even one step. The former is India's life-breath, the latter its body. Both grow in the soil of non-violence.

Though the matter is so plain, and though we keep uttering the word "non-violence", we harbour violence in our minds and are full of anger. Can a pseudo-saint who has "the name of Rama on his lips and a dagger under his arm" ascend to heaven?

Despite many warnings by me, the Bardoli resolutions were passed by a large majority. This has put me in a predicament. If all those votes have been cast with proper thought, the outcome can be good. If all the delegates who cast those votes believe that we should remain peaceful henceforth, that it is necessary for us to work on silently, then we shall acquire more strength than we have at present.

It is as necessary now to postpone going to jail as it once was to go to jail. Under tyrannical rule, the jail will always remain a gateway to freedom. But one needs to be an artist even for going to jail. Thieves and impostors go to jail, no doubt, but they do not secure freedom by doing so. They merely suffer their punishment there. Nor can those who go to jail with an agitated mind and full of anger be happy there. To them, the jail will not seem a home for service, whereas one who goes to jail with a calm mind will certainly believe that, even while in jail, he does the highest service, or better service [than he did outside]. While there, he should think with a quiet mind, increase his self-control and follow rules more strictly. Socrates made his best speech holding a cup of poison in his hand and, by his death, won immortality for himself and his words. Tilak Maharaj wrote his two greatest books in jail. No one can say that he wasted a single moment in jail or that the years he spent in jail were wasted. Even now, those[1] who have been doing their work in jails are in fact doing service.

At the present time, to court imprisonment will mean encouraging violence. Hence, staying out has become our duty for the time being.

[1] Imprisoned during the Non-co-operation campaign of 1920-21

We may fear that, if we do not go to jail, the enemy will look on us as cowards and we shall be dishonoured. When the enemy believes that we are cowards but actually we are not, the hour of our victory draws near because what seems to be our cowardliness is our strength and the enemy's illusion misleads him. How can he who prays only for God's help be ever dishonoured? One can be dishonoured only if one does anything even slightly unworthy. We do not wish to avoid imprisonment through fear of jail. But we should avoid it through fear of acting thoughtlessly or out of pride or through fear of encouraging violence. We may desist from courting imprisonment, not in order to please the enemy, but to please ourselves. Having abandoned the idea of going to jail, should we not get ready for hanging?

We should not do what the enemy wishes us to do. Just now, he wants us to get more angry still. He is trying to provoke us. He is shaking his fist defiantly at us, he looks angrily at us, growling and shaking his mane. If we allow ourselves to be provoked, we shall fall. His weapons are pride, hypocrisy, disregard for all restraint, and intimidation. Ours are peace and humility. We shall not mind if the enemy regards or describes us as frightened, but we cannot afford to see it proved that we have broken our pledge.

This is why I have decided that our first atonement is to leave the prisoners out of account for the time being. Having committed mistakes, we have lost our power to secure the release of the prisoners through our own efforts, and they do not want to be released through the Government's favour. If they are released by the Government on its own, they will be unhappy and we shall feel humiliated.

It is not as if we can get them released only by going to jail. We can secure their release through the power of truth and by remaining faithful to the pledge. Just as we can show our strength by going to jail, so can we also by doing constructive work. Our strength consists not in actually doing a particular thing but in the spirit in which it is done. One who goes to jail out of shame is not a man of strength but, when the occasion for going to jail arises, one who declines to do so even at the risk of being regarded as a coward may be a strong man. Strength lies in being true to ourselves in action.

If India or Gujarat carries out the constructive work in a month's time, it can secure the release of prisoners within that period. It is not at all difficult to do this if we have the services of many honest, thoughtful and well-known men as workers.

1. Every man and woman should take the Congress pledge and get his or her name enrolled at a Congress office, paying four annas.

2. Contributions should be collected for the Tilak Swaraj Fund[1].

3. National schools should be started and run.

4. The homes of liquor-addicts should be visited.

5. People who wear foreign cloth should be persuaded to wear khadi and the spinning-wheel should be introduced into every home.

6. *Antyajas* should be helped.

7. Panchayats should be set up.

8. Any person who suffers from a disease or injury should be nursed, irrespective of whether he be white or black.

There is not a single item among these which will require ages for implementation, unless public opinion is against our activities. But at present we claim that public opinion is with us. If it is so, and if we have honest workers with us, is there any item among those listed above in which we may not get immediate success?

To my mind, this programme is a test for the people. If they really desire victory through non-violence, they will carry it out enthusiastically. If they want only violence, they will most certainly oppose our constructive programme and, when we start civil disobedience, they will get ready to resort to their uncivil disobedience disguised as civil disobedience. This is the greatest danger facing us. Hence, those who wish to engage themselves in peaceful activities should resolutely go ahead along their chosen path. It will matter little if they are reduced to a mere handful in number, are humiliated or lose respect among the people. When this happens, they will be able to carry on their work fearlessly and take every step with firmness. At present, whenever they wish to resort to a strong measure like civil disobedience, they find themselves beset with difficulties.

My path is clear. I see that people exploit my name. Murders were committed in my name in Chauri Chaura. When I talk of civil disobedience, my listeners ignore "civil" and accept only "disobedience". The term "civil disobedience" should be taken as an indissoluble compound. There are two kinds of mixtures in chemistry. One is a simple mixture in which the elements which form the mixture retain their properties. The other is a compound in which the result is a third substance whose properties differ from those of either of the constituent elements. Civil disobedience is such a chemical compound. It entails not a single evil result of disobedience and we never find in it the effects

[1] Instituted as a memorial to Bal Gangadhar Tilak who died in 1920

produced by mere civility. We often see weakness with civility and arrogance, untruth, etc., with disobedience. In civil disobedience, everything should be above reproach and there should be complete fearlessness. As long as there are persons who break up the inseparable elements of this expression and accept only "disobedience" from it, it is well-nigh impossible to conduct civil disobedience. If, however, the people would boycott those who offer civil disobedience, the latter could demonstrate their strength. If they do not adopt that course, I shall have to non-co-operate with the party advocating violence, as I do with the Government.

I do not believe that the country is prepared for violence or that the weak "rice-eaters" can in any way profit from swaraj won through violence. They will remain victims of the votaries of violence, much as they are today. What the devotees of violence desire is not swaraj for the millions of India but power for themselves. Of course, they will not admit this charge. They do not even know that their activities are bound to have this result. I have not written this article in order to blame them. I am merely pointing at the consequences of their activities.

It is only by following the path of non-violence that India can win freedom in a few months. I believe that it cannot do so even in a hundred years by following the path of violence; if, moreover, the swaraj for which we are struggling is the swaraj of the poor and of the weak "rice-eaters", then the latter will not be able to shake off their weakness for a century [along the path of violence]. By our experiment in non-violence, we show even to the poor that, if they choose, they can display the same strength of their soul as an emperor can through his.

If this is not so, if this belief is unfounded, then this non-violent non-co-operation is also wrong and we can speak simply of non-co-operation. We should stop using terms like civility, peace, truth, etc., and calling the Government Satanic. One who fights with Satanic means has no right to regard or describe the opponent as Satanic.

I have, thus, more than enough reasons to be filled with despair, but I will certainly not give up hope. I shall hope that India will understand the full propriety of the Bardoli resolutions, that at least some provinces, if not all, in any event Gujarat, will thoroughly understand the absolute necessity of peace or that, if I cannot make even Gujarat understand it, there will be at least some individuals in the country who will understand this great step. My last hope is that, if I have always shown to India the path of truth, God will grant me the good sense and strength

to stick steadfastly to my pledge through every trial and ordeal. Hence, though enveloped in despair, I shall not abandon optimism. For, God means Truth and Truth means peace. God is, without doubt, the supporter of Truth. Truth always triumphs. Though knowing this, if through fear I doubt it, who would be a greater coward than I?

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-3-1922

3. *SWADESHI* v. *KHADI*

"Swadeshi" is a very widely known word. It is a comprehensive word. Such a word can have both a good and a bad effect. The sea is vast. But for it, we would not get oxygen. However, the sea, like fire, is all-devouring. Immeasurable dross is washed into it and yet in itself it is pure. The moment one leaves the shore behind, one finds that its water is as transparent as glass. Under the sun's rays, its spray shines like pearls and diamonds; the radiance of these is nothing compared to that of the sea. The sea lets ships sail across its waters, and yet, if anyone were to drink the water, he would feel sick. We get sweet potable water from wells, rivulets and small streams. Swadeshi, then, is a sea, an ocean. Nations can prosper by following it even to a small extent. When its meaning is explained, the word impresses. But, at present, if we take a headlong plunge into the sea of swadeshi, we are likely to be drowned. Just now, swadeshi is no more than an aspiration which it is beyond our capacity to realize.

Some say in the name of swadeshi that they will make or buy swadeshi padlocks and not buy Chubb padlocks. In preference to the Rogers brand of knives, some buy a knife with an edge none too fine, and even one which would not so much as cut a nose, and some others try to manufacture such knives. Some ask for swadeshi paper, while others want ink, penholders and pins. Thus, everyone demands a swadeshi product of his choice to gratify his sentiment for swadeshi. But this can be of no benefit to our country. It only brings the word "swadeshi" into disrepute and harms the cause.

A house-builder does not, at the very start, put up balconies, porticos, doors and windows and arrange furniture. First, he lays the foundation, then he builds the walls and when they are ready, he begins plastering and painting them. The same is true about the edifice of swadeshi.

By now we have understood the significance of swadeshi and have known its practical uses well enough to grasp its true meaning and import. Till now we have cheated ourselves in the name of swadeshi and effected a few changes. We took swadeshi to mean cloth produced in our country. That was the first stage. Then we realized that foreign yarn woven into cloth in India was not swadeshi and would benefit the country in but an insignificant measure. Thus came the second stage when we persuaded ourselves that cloth woven in the mills in our country from yarn produced by them would do. But we learnt through further experience that even this did not serve our purpose. One of its evil effects was that the price of mill-cloth went up considerably and scarcity of cloth seemed imminent.

The third stage was reached when we preferred cloth woven by hand though the yarn was spun in mills. Even in this, we did not show that we had grasped the real significance of swadeshi.

Now, arriving at the fourth stage we seem to have learnt that swadeshi means khadi woven by hand from hand-spun yarn. Everything else is false and useless.

Khadi means the spinning-wheel. How can we ever have khadi without it? Like swaraj, khadi is our birth-right, and it is our life-long duty to use that only. Anyone who does not fulfil that duty is totally ignorant of what swaraj is.

The aim of swadeshi or swaraj can be and is simply this, that the starving people of India may be fed, famine may be banished from the country, the chastity of Indian women may be safeguarded and Indian children in the country may get a little milk.

As long as the spinning-wheel does not become universal, like the oven, I believe it is impossible that India will be prosperous again.

Suppose India were free to act as she desired and imported the cheapest cloth, that, regardless of the difference in the conditions obtaining in England and here, she introduced "free trade", that is, trade without protective tariff, her plight would then become worse than it is today.

Just as our people cannot afford to do away with the ovens in their homes even if someone offered to cook their food for them free of charge, so also they cannot afford to do away with the spinning-wheel. "What a bother is the oven! In every home an oven, and fire to be lighted in every home. What a nuisance this is! As the day dawns, every housewife must swallow smoke. How oppressive this is!" What would happen if, misled by such deceptive arguments, we should choose to take our meals at a common dining-club in every village, having thrown away our

ovens? Can anyone doubt that the children in the country will then go uncared for? The destruction of the oven is not economics, it is the science of doom. It does not deserve the honour of being called economics.

By abolishing the spinning-wheel, we have invited upon ourselves starvation and immorality. If we banish the oven, we would invite death. By reinstating the spinning-wheel, we would brighten our homes which have become desolate.

Hence, in the present circumstances, our special and highest duty is khadi. Khadi should be in demand like ghee. Hand-spun yarn should be regarded as valuable as milk. The spinning-wheel is also as venerable as the cow. Just as a home without a cow is no home, so too a home without a spinning-wheel is no home. Just as neither the rich nor the poor consider milking a cow a degrading thing, so too the rich and the poor—everyone—should regard spinning not as a degrading thing but as something becoming a householder. A cow sometimes kicks and she demands fodder. The spinning-wheel is so benevolent that it does not kick and needs no food at all. You can draw from it yarn, white as milk, at your will. A cow yields milk according to her capacity. The spinning-wheel gives yarn according to our capacity. Preserving the spinning-wheel means protecting the cow. Anyone who would preserve the spinning-wheel ought to use only such khadi in which both the warp and the woof are hand-spun.

I feel and everyone should feel ashamed that the Provincial Congress Committee has to advertise khadi. That foreign cloth or mill cloth is sold and khadi remains unsold is certainly no sign of India's prosperity. It is like eating the bran in preference to the grain.

Protection of the cow has become almost impossible except through the revival of the spinning-wheel. Because Indian farmers do not have money, they sell off their cattle or starve them. As Indians are weak, so are all their cattle, for the country's state is that of a bankrupt. India uses up its capital resources in order to live. The capital is getting exhausted day by day. India does not get enough of oxygen and feels suffocated. The people of India are forced to remain idle at least for four months in a year. People who are thus forced to remain idle cannot but be ruined. For crores of people, the spinning-wheel is the only occupation which can supplement their income from the fields; most emphatically, they have no other one.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-3-1922

4. *MY NOTES*

Congress Levy

Those who command people's obedience have their taxes willingly paid. There are big temples in India and they are maintained by their devotees without any effort having to be made for the purpose. Surely, no volunteers had gone round collecting funds for the golden dome that crowns the Vishwanath temple at Kashi. The pious made donations on their own. The Sikh temple at Amritsar has a plastering of marble, doors of silver and gold-plate on the dome, for which reason it is known as the Golden Temple. Its wealth was willingly contributed by the pious Sikhs. The money for the huge mosques that we see at so many places was received without a collection drive. It should be so about the Congress too. If the people regard the Congress as means which enables them to follow their dharma and their worldly pursuits, if the Muslims believe that Congress rule means the protection of the Khilafat and freedom for themselves, if the Hindus see in it protection of the cow, and their own freedom, the Parsis the protection of their fire-temples and their own freedom and if the Christians and Jews also feel likewise, all of them should support the Congress in their own interests or as a matter of duty. Supporting the Congress means, among other things, paying its levy. If it is a body enjoying popular support, it should never be in want of funds. We shall know before long whether or not it is a popular organization.

This time, the Congress has really levied a tax. There already was one levy—the sum of four annas required to be paid by those enrolling themselves as members and wishing to be voters. The new levy should be paid by all whether they are members or not —even the salaried class who like the Congress.

Those who revere Tilak Maharaj, who believe that the greatest memorial to him is the attainment of swaraj, should pay the levy.

The new levy is equivalent to one per cent of one's income during the last year. That is to say, the Congress wants one rupee from a person whose income for the year was Rs. 100. This levy is the lightest. The Government scrutinizes books of account, the Congress will examine the heart. Everyone should send to the Congress office his contribution in proportion to his income.

But my aim in writing this article is rather personal. Nearly 35,000 copies of *Navajivan* sell every week. Taking it that a copy is read by at least three persons, there are 1,05,000 readers. I wish to test them. If they approve of the work being done by the Congress, they should pay their levy through *Navajivan.* Every reader of *Navajivan* may send his own levy or readers in every town should collect the levy from their friends—never from strangers —and remit the collection to the *Navajivan* office. Its receipt will be acknowledged in *Navajivan* every week and the amount will be sent to the Secretary of the Provincial Congress Committee.

I hope everyone will honestly pay one per cent of his income. People may pay more if they like, but none should pay less. Those paying less may send any amount they like as a gift but, as levy to the Tilak Swaraj Fund, they should pay no less than one per cent. They may pay more according to their inclinations. Those who can pay more should certainly do so, so as to make good to the Congress the loss on account of those who do not pay. Those paying more may be regarded as paying on behalf of others.

At present, this money can be used mainly for three purposes. The donor may earmark his contribution for any one of them as he may desire. They are : popularizing khadi or the spinning-wheel, education and work among the *Antyajas.* We must put education on a sound basis during this year. I would regard it as a matter of shame for us if there was even one pupil in a Government school. We can attract every child to our schools by improving them. It will also be a shame for us if there is even one child who does not attend a school.

Both these activities are such that, if they are organized honestly, those who pay the levy and the people as a whole will get a tenfold return. The fifteen lakhs which Gujarat gave last year have been mainly used for these two activities. This year we shall need for them even more funds, not less. Moreover, we shall undoubtedly have to spend this year more money on work among the *Antyajas.* Hence, if the work of the Congress has satisfied the Gujaratis, they will pay more but not less [than they did last year] and make the collection less troublesome. This will be the first test of the measure of willing obedience which the Congress commands. I hope that people will start paying this levy, each one of his own accord without waiting to see what others do.

Let everyone note that the accounts of the Provincial Congress Committee are perfectly in order. They have even been examined by two auditors, one appointed by the local Congress Committee

and the other by the All-India Congress Committee, and have been published from time to time.

Ahmedabad Municipality

A municipality is under the general control of the people, while a Committee [appointed by the Government] has administrative authority in its own hands. When the Government set up such a committee, the Municipality became national, because the relations of the people's representatives with the Government came to an end.

This event can be viewed from two angles. If we regard the suspension of the Municipality by the Government as an unexpected and unwelcome development, we cannot say that the Municipality has become national; we should say, rather, that people have been deprived of the power they enjoyed. If we hold—and that of course is the right thing to do—that it was our aim that the Government should either surrender to the Municipality or suspend it, then we can say that the Municipality has become independent or national.

It is for the citizens to show whether or not it has really become national. If they trust their representatives and get the city's work done through them, then the Municipality has become national. If on the contrary they submit to the Committee even in matters in which they can easily exercise their freedom, it will be plain that the Municipality has been taken over by the Government.

The honour of the citizens and of their representatives rests in the hands of the citizens themselves. No one can command the obedience of another against his wishes. This is an immutable law. It is true that, in thousands of instances, we feel that people are made to do things under force. If someone makes me do anything under threat of death, we call it coercion. However, if I have no fear of death, who can force me to do anything? I cannot, therefore, say that I have done anything against my wish. When a person does something, submitting to physical force, it is certainly customary to say that he did what he did against his will. Actually, it is not so. The soul binds as well as releases itself.

The dispute was only about education. As regards lighting, sanitation, water supply, etc., the Municipality certainly wanted to co-operate with the Government. We had nothing much to lose if the Government lighted the street lamps. What we could not tolerate was that the Government should kindle the flame of knowledge in the temples of our children's hearts or that it should

whitewash their brains. That flame and that whitewashing were not natural. Therefore, we made our education national. On this subject, our views and those of the Government could not be reconciled. The citizens can assert their supremacy in this matter. Let the Government clean the roads if it so chooses. We do not have to pass them on to the Government to get them swept, but children can be taught in schools only if we send them there willingly. Hence, if the citizens would only give some thought to the subject of education, they would be able to maintain complete freedom in this field.

I was pleased to hear, while returning from Delhi,[1] that about 35 national schools had already been started for nearly 7,000 children and that arrangements were afoot to start more. I hope there will not be a single boy or girl left in the schools managed by the Committee, that is, by the Government.

If the citizens so desire, not a single boy or girl will ever attend a Government school. Sometimes our affairs suffer because of our own lassitude or indifference. Let us hope that the citizens will not remain indifferent in regard to their children at any rate. We have merely to find money and provide good education. It is possible to impart the best education to children at minimum cost if we retain control of education in our hands.

I congratulate those parents who have withdrawn their children from Government schools and those who have made over their buildings, as also the teachers who have given up Government service. I hope that they will complete what they have started and go even farther.

"The Committee will have the citizens' money—people will pay taxes." I would advise that we do not discuss this matter at this stage. I shall consider it a complete victory of the citizens if they carry out the programme in regard to education. It will be proper to raise other issues only after completing this job. If we start another struggle now, this most important task is likely to suffer. Besides, starting another struggle is likely to add to the prevailing bitterness. There will be grace in it if we can carry out even the programme of education with mutual understanding and without fuss. If the citizens succeed in organizing the work of education independently and if there is no use or show of force, direct or indirect, that will set no ordinary example for others to follow.

[1] Gandhiji returned to Ahmedabad from Delhi on March 1.

MERCHANTS' ANXIETY

We see that the merchant class feels apprehensive at present. The merchants fear that the present struggle will ruin business. This is not a correct view. The struggle is not directed against trade or traders; it is for the benefit of trade. Today, out of every hundred rupees, the traders themselves earn only five and send the rest out of the country. If the present struggle succeeds, they will retain all the hundred or keep five for themselves and let ninety-five reach the homes of the poor.

Businessmen need only to be fearless, to have confidence and take a little risk. It is not that the Government encourages trade; it encourages slavery and, at most, brokerage. For every Indian whom it allows to be a millionaire, it helps a hundred others in Europe to be so. I hope businessmen who understand this plain reasoning will plunge headlong into the struggle; if the trading class plays its part well, there will be an early end to this struggle and the traders themselves, as also the rest of the country, will be able to carry on their normal work in peace.

The cloth merchants will have to show more courage than others. They should give up trade in foreign and mill cloth and should sell pure khadi only. Honest trade in khadi also can flourish; it will provide livelihood to hundreds and thus promote the welfare of the people. One need not assume that businessmen can never remain honest. They will see from experience that, if they set a limit to their profits, they will never have to resort to untruth.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 5-3-1922

5. FOREWORD

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 5, 1922

Typed copies of Mr. Badrul Hassan's chapters on the Drink and Drug Evil have lain on my desk for over three months. I had hoped to be able to go through them and write a fairly long foreword, and in that hope I have been postponing writing the foreword. I must no longer do so.

Mr. Badrul Hassan was for many months assisting me in bringing out *Young India* from week to week. The readers of *Young India* will recall his chapters on the Alcohol and Opium

habits. They discover a close study of blue-books and statistical abstracts. The chapters now presented to the reader are a reprint of Mr. Badrul Hassan's writings in *Young India* with enlargements and additions. They will repay perusal, and they cannot but help the reformer who is bent upon ridding India of the double evil. Mr. Badrul Hassan's study shows also how the policy of the Government has tended to increase the habit. The facts and figures presented in these chapters to the reader demonstrate in the clearest possible manner that the Government has trafficked in these two vices of the people of India. It will be no defence to urge that the vice has existed in India from time immemorial. No one organized the vice as the present Government has for purposes of revenue. But I must not anticipate. Let the young writer prove his own case.

M. K. GANDHI

The Drink and Drug Evil in India, pp. V-VI

6. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

Sunday [March 5, 1922][1]

CHI. DEVDAS[2],

What you write about Vasumatiben is correct. I regard Krishnadas to be a yogi. His calmness, patience, intelligence, and single-mindedness are all worthy of emulation.

You did well in asking me the questions you did in your letter. I am an *anekantavadi*[3]. I can see many sides of a question. The guard cannot demand from a passenger, whom he might find without a ticket, fare from a place beyond the last checking station. This is the general practice. That is why I told him that the fare from Abu Road could not be paid. Besides, it was none of your duty to pay it. Those boys had boarded the train quite innocently. I had accepted as reasonable the argument that they must pay the fare from Palanpur. I had thought that they were unwilling to pay it.

[1] Jawaharlal Nehru's release, to which this letter refers, took place on Friday, March 3, 1922.

[2] Devdas Gandhi (1900-1957); youngest son of Gandhiji; worked in Champaran villages in 1917 and went to jail during the Salt Satyagraha, 1930; managing editor, *The Hindustan Times*, 1940-57

[3] One who believes in looking at things from more than one point of view

This is the position about the Modern School. Because boys were forced to join in honouring the Prince, picketing was no answer. You could have publicly protested against it. Moreover, I thought that your case was that you resorted to picketing because the boys were punished. That was still worse.

If you wish to ask any more questions, you may.

Now that Jawaharlal has come out, you will get plenty of help.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Keep to the rule as regards time.

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: S.N. 7979

7. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

Silence Day [March 6, 1922][1]

CHI. DEVDAS,

These are the wire and letter received here.[2] The letter is from Satish Babu. Reply to him immediately.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I replied to you yesterday. Do go and see Mr. Joseph, the Headmaster, when you get time.

From a photostat of the Gujarati original : S.N. 7980

8. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI[3]

Silence Day, March 6, 1922

You must have calmed down by now. There is, therefore, not much to write. I have not yet written to Mahadev. I intend to do so today. If I write, I shall send the letter to you and you may forward it to him, so that your curiosity may be satisfied.

[1] The postscript evidently refers to the Modern School incident mentioned in the preceding item.

[2] These are not available.

[3] Son of Gandhiji's sister

You do not have to apologize for anything you write to me. I may learn something from it.

I am an *anekantavadi*. This is the most important thing that I have learnt from Jain philosophy. It is implicit in Vedanta philosophy, while in Jain philosophy it is explicitly stated. I do not see any contradiction between what I did in Delhi[1] and what I am doing in suspending the movement. Had I been rigid in Delhi, it would have been violence on my part. When friends put their difficulties before me with an open mind, how could I brush them aside? When, however, I decided to give freedom to the Provinces, I made up my own plans and thus accommodated both the parties. So far as the Government was concerned, I had nothing to consider. It was for this reason that Gokhale[2] bestowed two adjectives upon me.

He told the members of the Society[3] that I was as yielding as I was rigid and advised them to admit me. But they could see only my rigidity. I shall spend Sunday and Monday in Surat and go to Bardoli on Tuesday.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, pp. 46-7

9. *LETTER TO T. PRAKASAM*

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 7, 1922

MY DEAR PRAKASAM[4],

You ask me for my future programme. I have just sent you a telegram as follows :

"In Ahmedabad till Saturday Surat Sunday Monday Bardoli Tuesday."

[1] At a meeting of the Congress Working Committee in Delhi on February 24-25, Gandhiji tried to bring about a compromise between conflicting views on the suspension of civil disobedience; *vide* Vol. XXII, pp. 480-5.

[2] Gopal Krishna Gokhale (1866-1915); patriot and statesman; presided over the Banaras session of the Indian National Congress in 1905; founder of the Servants of India Society; visited South Africa in 1912 at Gandhiji's suggestion.

[3] The Servants of India Society, Poona

[4] 1876-1957; editor, *Swarajya*; was known as "Andhra Kesari"—the lion of Andhra; Chief Minister of Madras and later, of Andhra Pradesh.

But that is Government willing, for I have persistent rumours being thrust upon me that my leave is now more than over-due, and I am also told that I shall be relieved of my burdens inside of 7 days. Subject, therefore, to that happy contingency you have the foregoing programme. If I am arrested, I look to you and all who are out to keep absolute peace. It will be the best honour that the country can do me. Nothing would pain me more, in whatever jail I may find myself, than to be informed by my custodians that a single head has been broken by or on behalf of non-co-operators, a single man had been insulted or a single building damaged. If the people or the workers have at all understood my message, they will keep exemplary peace. I would certainly be delighted if on the night following my arrest there was throughout the length and breadth of India a bonfire of all foreign cloth voluntarily surrendered by the people without the slightest compulsion having been exercised and a fixed determination to use nothing but khaddar and, till then, in the glorious weather of India, to wear nothing but a piece of loin-cloth, and in the case of Mussalmans the minimum required by religious obligation. I would certainly love to be told that there was a phenomenal demand for spinning-wheels and that all workers who did not know hand-spinning had commenced it in right earnest. The more I think over our future programme and the more news I get about the spirit of violence that has silently but surely crept into our ranks, the more convinced I am that even individual civil disobedience would be wrong. It would be much better to be forsaken by everybody and to be doing the right thing than to be doing the wrong thing for the sake of boasting a large following. Whether we are few or whether we are many, so long as we believe in the programme of non-violence, there is no absolution from the full constructive programme. Enforce it today, and the whole country is ready for mass civil disobedience tomorrow. Fail in the effort, and you are not ready even for individual civil disobedience. Nor is the matter difficult. If all the members of the All-India Congress Committee and Provincial Congress Committees are convinced of the correctness of the premises I have laid down, the same can be done. The pity of it is that they are not so convinced. A policy is a temporary creed liable to be changed, but while it holds good, it has got to be pursued with apostolic zeal.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 7973

10. TELEGRAM TO T. PRAKASAM

[*March 8, 1922*]

GLAD TO LEARN VENKATAPPAYYA'S ARREST.[1] HOPE THERE WILL BE NO HARTAL, NO DEMONSTRATION, NO CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE, NOT EVEN MENTAL ANGUISH, BUT A GRIM DETERMINATION TO PURSUE THE CONSTRUCTIVE PROGRAMME. MOST EFFECTIVE DEMONSTRATION WOULD BE FOR EVERY ANDHRA WHO LOVES VENKATAPPAYYA TO DISCARD ALL FOREIGN CLOTH, TAKE TO SPINNING AND REMOVE UNTOUCHABILITY. ATTENDING YOUR REQUIREMENTS.

GANDHI

Seven Months with Mahatma Gandhi, p. 257

11. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Wednesday [*March 8, 1922*][2]

CHI. MAGANLAL[3],

Dr. Mehta[4] has asked for a man for Ratu. I can think of no one except Surendra[5]. The work requires patience, love and forbearance. Speak to Surendra. See that he does not give his consent merely out of regard for us. Let him move about with Ratu. If he can win him over, he may bring Ratu here. But if he is unwilling, he should be free to decline. If you can think of any other alternative, let me know. If Surendra is agreeable to go, he should see me at Bardoli and then start. If he decides to go, wire Dr. [Mehta] and ask him whether we could send Surendra.

[1] *Vide* "Deshbhakta's Arrest", 9-3-1922.

[2] Gandhiji reached Ajmer on this date.

[3] Maganlal Khushalchand Gandhi (1883-1928); Gandhiji's nephew; sometime manager of the Phœnix Settlement, Natal; manager, Satyagraha Ashram, Sabarmati, 1915-28

[4] Dr. Pranjivan Jagjivan Mehta, Gandhiji's friend since his student days in London

[5] Presumably Surendra Medh of Ahmedabad who had participated in Gandhiji's satyagraha movement in South Africa

I am writing this on way to Ajmer. I shall return from there on Friday.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5987. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

12. *LETTER TO ESTHER MENON*[1]

AJMER,
March 8, 1922

MY DEAR CHILD,

It is only here where I have come for a day, that I get the time to write to you. The loss of your Bohemian independence is more than made up by your sharing your life with another. If marriage has any meaning at all, it must point to the greater self-surrender which is in store for everyone of us. The surrender by two dissimilar (in form) persons one to the other is greater independence because it is a realization of greater responsibility. The discharge of the greatest responsibility is the greatest independence. This is secured only by the fullest surrender to God.

I know you will come whenever you can. I am not moving from Gujarat for some time, if I am still left free. There are all sorts of rumours about my arrest.

Miss Petersen[2] owes me a letter.

With my love to you all,

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat of the original in N.A.I.; also *My Dear Child*, p. 75

[1] Esther Faering, who was like a daughter to Gandhiji, had married E. K. Menon. She had come to India as a Danish missionary and later joined Sabarmati Ashram; *vide* Vol. XIV, p. 106.

[2] Anne Marie Petersen, a Danish missionary

13. *NON-VIOLENCE*

When a person claims to be non-violent, he is expected not to be angry with one who has injured him. He will not wish him harm; he will wish him well; he will not swear at him; he will not cause him any physical hurt. He will put up with all the injury to which he is subjected by the wrongdoer. Thus non-violence is complete innocence. Complete non-violence is complete absence of ill will against all that lives. It therefore embraces even sub-human life not excluding noxious insects or beasts. They have not been created to feed our destructive propensities. If we only knew the mind of the Creator, we should find their proper place in His creation. Non-violence is therefore, in its active form, goodwill towards all life. It is pure Love. I read it in the Hindu scriptures, in the Bible, in the Koran.

Non-violence is a perfect state. It is a goal towards which all mankind moves naturally though unconsciously. Man does not become divine when he personifies innocence in himself. Only then does he become truly man. In our present state, we are partly men and partly beasts and, in our ignorance and even arrogance, say that we truly fulfil the purpose of our species when we deliver blow for blow and develop the measure of anger required for the purpose. We pretend to believe that retaliation is the law of our being, whereas in every scripture we find that retaliation is nowhere obligatory but only permissible. It is restraint that is obligatory. Retaliation is indulgence requiring elaborate regulating. Restraint is the law of our being. For, highest perfection is unattainable without highest restraint. Suffering is thus the badge of the human tribe.

The goal ever recedes from us. The greater the progress, the greater the recognition of our unworthiness. Satisfaction lies in the effort, not in the attainment. Full effort is full victory.

Therefore, though I realize more than ever how far I am from that goal, for me the Law of complete Love is the law of my being. Each time I fail, my effort shall be all the more determined for my failure.

But I am *not* preaching this final law through the Congress or the Khilafat organization. I know my own limitations only too well. I know that any such attempt is foredoomed to failure. To expect a whole mass of men and women to obey that law all at once is not to know its working. But I do preach from the Congress

platform the deductions of the law. What the Congress and the Khilafat organizations have accepted is but a fragment of the implications of that law. Given true workers, the limited measure of its application can be realized in respect of vast masses of people within a short time. But the little measure of it to be true must satisfy the same test as the whole. A drop of water must yield to the analyst the same results as a lakeful. The nature of my non-violence towards my brother cannot be different from that of my non-violence to the universe. When I extend the love for my brother to the whole universe, it must still satisfy the same test.

A particular practice is a policy when its application is limited to time or space. Highest policy is therefore fullest practice. But honesty as policy while it lasts is not anything different from honesty as a creed. A merchant believing in honesty as a policy will sell the same measure and quality of cloth to the yard as a merchant with honesty as a creed. The difference between the two is that the political merchant will leave his honesty when it does not pay, the believing one will continue it even though he should lose his all.

The political non-violence of the non-co-operator does not stand this test in the vast majority of cases. Hence the prolongation of the struggle. Let no one blame the unbending English nature. The hardest "fibre" must melt in the fire of love. I cannot be dislodged from the position because I know it. When British or other nature does not respond, the fire is not strong enough, if it is there at all.

Our non-violence need not be of the strong, but it *has* to be of the truthful. We must not intend harm to the English or to our co-operating countrymen if and whilst we claim to be non-violent. But the majority of us *have* intended harm, and we have refrained from doing it because of our weakness or under the ignorant belief that mere refraining from physical hurt amounted to due fulfilment of our pledge. Our pledge of non-violence excludes the possibility of future retaliation. Some of us seem, unfortunately, to have merely postponed the date of revenge.

Let me not be misunderstood. I do not say that the policy of non-violence excludes the possibility of revenge when the policy is abandoned. But it does most emphatically exclude the possibility of future revenge after a successful termination of the struggle. Therefore, whilst we are pursuing the policy of non-violence, we are bound to be actively friendly to English administrators and their co-operators. I felt ashamed when I was told that

in some parts of India it was not safe for Englishmen or well-known co-operators to move about safely. The disgraceful scenes that took place at a recent Madras meeting were a complete denial of non-violence. Those who howled down the Chairman, because he was supposed to have insulted me, disgraced themselves and their policy. They wounded the heart of their friend and helper, Mr. Andrews[1]. They injured their own cause. If the Chairman believed that I was a scoundrel, he had a perfect right to say so. Ignorance is no provocation. But a non-co-operator is pledged to put up with the gravest provocation. Provocation there would be, when I act scoundrel-like. I grant that it will be enough to absolve every non-co-operator from the pledge of non-violence and that any non-co-operator will be fully justified in taking my life for misleading him.

It may be that even cultivation of such limited non-violence is impossible in the majority of cases. It may be that we must not expect people even out of self-interest not to *intend* harm to the opponent whilst they are *doing* none. We must then, to be honest, clearly give up the use of the word "non-violence" in connection with our struggle. The alternative need not be immediate resort to violence. But the people will not then be called upon to subject themselves to any discipline in non-violence. A person like me will not then feel called upon to shoulder the responsibility for Chauri Chaura. The school of limited non-violence will then still flourish in its obscurity, but without the terrible burden of responsibility it carries today.

But if non-violence is to remain the policy of the nation, for its fair name and that of humanity, we are bound to carry it out to the letter and in the spirit.

And if we intend to follow out the policy, if we believe in it, we must then quickly make up with the Englishmen and the co-operators. We must get their certificate that they feel absolutely safe in our midst and that they may regard us as friends although we belong to a radically different school of thought and politics. We must welcome them to our political platforms as honoured guests. We must meet them on neutral platforms as comrades. We must devise methods of such meeting. Our non-violence must not breed violence, hatred and ill will. We stand like the rest of fellow-mortals to be judged by our works. A programme of non-violence for the attainment of swaraj necessarily means ability to conduct our affairs on non-violent lines. That means inculcation

[1] Charles Freer Andrews (1871-1940); English missionary, author, educationist and a close associate of Gandhiji

of a spirit of obedience. Mr. Churchill[1], who understands only the gospel of force, is quite right in saying that the Irish problem is different in character from the Indian. He means in effect that the Irish, having fought their way to their swaraj through violence, will be well able to maintain it by violence, if need be. India, on the other hand, if she wins swaraj in reality by non-violence, must be able to maintain it chiefly by non-violent means. This Mr. Churchill can hardly believe to be possible unless India proves her ability by an ocular demonstration of the principle. Such a demonstration is impossible unless non-violence has permeated society so that people in their *corporate*, i.e., political, life respond to non-violence, in other words, civil instead of military authority, as at present, gains predominance.

Swaraj by non-violent means can therefore never mean an interval of chaos and anarchy. Swaraj by non-violence must be a progressively peaceful revolution such that the transference of power from a close corporation to the people's representatives will be as natural as the dropping of a fully ripe fruit from a well-nurtured tree. I say again that such a thing may be quite impossible of attainment. But I know that nothing less is the implication of non-violence. And if the present workers do not believe in the probability of achieving such comparatively non-violent atmosphere, they should drop the non-violent programme and frame another which is wholly different in character. If we approach our programme with the mental reservation that, after all, we shall wrest the power from the British by force of arms, then we are untrue to our profession of non-violence. If we believe in our programme, we are bound to believe that the British people are not unamenable to the force of affection as they are undoubtedly amenable to force of arms. For the unbelievers, the Councils are undoubtedly the school of learning with their heavy programme of humiliations spread over a few generations or a rapid but bloody revolution probably never witnessed before in the world. I have no desire to take part in such a revolution. I will not be a willing instrument for promoting it. The choice, in my opinion, lies between honest non-violence with non-co-operation as its necessary corollary or reversion to responsive co-operation, i.e., co-operation *cum* obstruction.

Young India, 9-3-1922

[1] Sir Winston Churchill (1874-1965); British statesman and writer, Secretary of State for War, 1918-21; Prime Minister, 1940-45, 1951-55; was awarded Nobel Prize for literature in 1953.

14. *AFTER CHAURI CHAURA*

To the Editor, *Young India*

Sir,

I was one of the six deputed at Hata Tehsil by the District Congress Committee, Gorakhpur, to help the villages in resuming their normal aspect. Hata Tehsil is in the vicinity of Chauri Chaura. During my short stay there, I was flooded with the reports of the unbridled tyranny of the police from various quarters. News came from Dhanavti (and I had no reasons to dismiss them as untrue) that the police had exacted bribes from the people on pain of implicating them in the Chauri Chaura affair. While I was touring through the villages, I was authentically informed at Usri that three persons of Deogaon, Chattar Dhari, Ram Khagid and Amlu were made to pay Rs. 10, 2 and 1 respectively by the *sowars* at the point of the spear. Reports of brutal assaults were not lacking. I myself saw with my own naked eyes the cuts inflicted by the merciless shower of lashes (or cane) to which one Bhagelua Koeri of Ubhaon village was subjected. One rupee was subsequently snatched away from him which belonged to the Congress Fund. I have known the people who have been actually looted. If the Government cares to contradict the reports, I will take it upon myself to prove the substance of the allegations I have made.

I assure you many a crime of the police would not see the light of the day. If you come to know of the splendid patience with which the Khalabadis (the people of Basti Tehsil) are bearing the untold miseries that have fallen to their lot, you will bless them abundantly.

Sudarshan Bhavan
Allahabad,
28-2-'22

Yours, etc.,
Jang Bahadur Singh

Whatever the guilt of the crowd at Chauri Chaura, the police outrages reported by numerous correspondents are wholly unjustified. The remedy with the people is to love the police in spite of their atrocities and to wean them from their error.

Young India, 9-3-1922

15. NOTES

Perplexed

A correspondent from Lahore writes under date 3rd March:

> So far as the facts about "Bardoli decision" have come to light, it appears the decision was arrived at either under the influence of Pundit Malaviya[1] or under some far-fetched notions of non-violence. In the former case the act is most unworthy, and in the latter it is most unwise. Is not the ideal of the Congress swaraj and not non-violence? People have imbibed non-violence generally, which surely must do for the Congress purpose. How the breaches like those at Bombay and Gorakhpur can make the engine come to a standstill, I cannot understand. And if M. Paul Richard is true as to your aspirations of a World Leader through non-violence even at the cost of Indian interest, it is surely unbecoming and, excuse me to say, dishonest.
>
> And have you realized the effects of this sudden standstill? Mr. Montagu's[2] threat comes for that. Lord Reading[3] and his Government are harder to us than ever before. It had almost yielded. As to the public, there is a general distrust prevailing among the classes and the masses. Surely it is difficult to make men play things of the hour and their disgust and disappointment show how the fight was carried on in right earnest. Don't you perceive that it is a shock and that two such shocks must enervate the combatants altogether?
>
> Besides, I have heard the responsible Mussalmans talk of withdrawing co-operation even from the Hindus. The fight is religious with them. It is the Jehad, I should say. God's Command and the Prophet's is no joke to start and to stop the Jehad at will. If the Hindus should retire, they say they must devise their own course. Will you take care to ease one heart that feels uneasy on this account?

It is impossible to withhold sympathy from the writer. His letter is typical of the attitude I saw reflected in Delhi. I have already given the assurance that Pundit Malaviyaji had nothing to do with the Bardoli decision. Nor have any "far-fetched no-

[1] Madan Mohan Malaviya (1861-1946); founder of the Banaras Hindu University; member, Imperial Legislative Council; twice President of the Indian National Congress, 1909 and 1919

[2] Secretary of State for India, 1917-22

[3] Lord Reading (1860-1935); Viceroy and Governor-General of India, 1921-26; Foreign Secretary in the first National Government of England, 1931

tions of non-violence" anything to do with it. The correspondent's letter is the best justification for it. To me the Bardoli decision is the logical outcome of the national pledge of limited non-violence. I entirely endorse the opinion that swaraj is the nation's goal, not non-violence. It is true that my goal is as much swaraj as non-violence, because I hold swaraj for the masses to be unattainable save through non-violence. But have I not repeatedly said in these columns that I would have India become free even by violence rather than that she should remain in bondage? In slavery she is a helpless partner in the violence of the slave-holder. It is however true that I could not take part in a violent attempt at deliverance if only because I do not believe in the possibility of success by violence. I cannot pull the trigger against my worst enemy. If I succeed in convincing the world of the supremacy of the law of non-violence and the futility of violence for the progress of mankind, the correspondent will find that India will have automatically gained her end. But I freely confess my utter inability to do so without first convincing India that she can be free only by non-violent and truthful means and no other.

I must further confess that what Mr. Montagu or Lord Reading would think of the decision did not concern me and therefore their threats do not perturb or affect me. Nor should they affect any non-co-operator. He burnt his boats when he embarked upon his mission. But this I know that, if India becomes non-violent in intent, word and deed, even the hearts of Mr. Montagu and Lord Reading will be changed. As it is, marvellous though our progress has been in non-violent action, our hearts and our speech have not become non-violent. Mr. Montagu and Lord Reading do not believe in the sincerity of our profession nor in the possibility of sincere workers succeeding in creating a truly non-violent atmosphere. What is therefore required is more and yet more non-violence "in intent, word and deed".

As for the people, I have little doubt that they will survive the purifying shock. I regard the present depression as a prelude to steady progress. But should it prove otherwise, the truth of the Bardoli decision cannot be denied. It stands independent of public approval. God *is*, even though the whole world deny Him. Truth *stands*, even if there be no public support. It is self-sustained.

I should be sorry, indeed, if responsible Mussalmans will not see the obvious corollaries of non-violence. In my opinion the fight is as religious with Hindus as with Mussalmans. I agree that ours is a spiritual jehad. But a jehad has, like all other

wars, its strict restrictions and limitations. The Hindus and Mussalmans sail in the same boat. The dissatisfaction is common to both and it is open to both to dissolve partnership with each other. Either or both may also depose me from generalship. It is purely a partnership at will. Finally I assure the correspondent that, when I find that I cannot carry conviction home to the people, I shall withdraw from the command myself.

Other Implications

I invite the reader to study the leading article of the week on non-violence.[1] The article became fairly long even with a discussion of the main principles. I did not therefore discuss the important side issues in it but reserved them for the Notes.

Such for instance are the questions:

(1) When can even individual civil disobedience be resumed?

(2) What kind of violence will stop civil disobedience?

(3) Is there room for self-defence in the limited conception of non-violence?

(4) Supposing the Mussalmans or the Hindus secede, can a non-violent campaign be carried on by one community alone?

(5) Supposing Hindus and Mussalmans both reject me, what would become of my preaching?

I shall take the questions seriatim. Civil disobedience, even individual civil disobedience, requires a tranquil atmosphere. It must not be commenced till the workers have assimilated the spirit of non-violence and have procured a certificate of merit from the co-operators whether English or Indian, i.e., till they have really ceased to think ill of them. The surest test will be when our meetings are purged of intolerance and our writings of bitterness. Another necessary test will be our serious handling of the constructive programme. If we cannot settle down to it, to me it will be proof positive of our disbelief in the capacity of non-violence to achieve the purpose.

Non-violent Atmosphere

It is not every kind of violence that will stop civil disobedience. I should not be dismayed by family feuds even though they may be sanguinary. Nor will the violence of robbers baffle me though they would be to me an indication of the absence of general purification. It is political violence which *must* stop civil disobedience. Chauri Chaura was an instance of political violence. It arose from a political demonstration which we should have avoided if

[1] *Vide* "Non-violence", 9-3-1922.

we were not capable of conducting it absolutely peacefully. I did not allow Malabar and Malegaon[1] to interrupt our course, because the Moplahs were a special people and they had not come under the influence of non-violence to any appreciable extent. Malegaon is more difficult, but there is clear evidence that the chief non-co-operators had tried their best to prevent the murders. Nor was mass civil disobedience imminent at the time. It could not interrupt individual civil disobedience elsewhere.

Self-defence

The non-co-operator's pledge does not exclude the right of private self-defence. Non-co-operators are under prohibition as to political violence. Those, therefore, with whom non-co-operation is not their final creed, are certainly free to defend themselves or their dependents and wards against their assailants. But they may not defend themselves against the police acting in discharge of their duties, whether assumed or authorized. Thus, there was no right of self-defence under the pledge against Collectors who have, I hold, illegally belaboured volunteers.

If Mussalmans or Hindus Secede

If one of the big communities secede from the compact of non-violence, I admit that it is most difficult, though certainly not impossible, for one party only to carry on the struggle. That party will need to have an invulnerable faith in the policy of non-violence. But if one community does realize that India cannot gain swaraj for generations through violent means, it can by its consistently non-violent, i.e., loving conduct, bring round all the opposing parties to its side.

If Both Reject Me

If both the parties reject me, I should keep my peace just as ever and most decidedly carry on my propaganda of non-violence. I should then not be restricted as I am now. Then I should be enforcing my creed, as today I seem to be enforcing only the policy.

Manufacture of Crime

A correspondent sends the translation of the following notice issued by the Cantonment Magistrate at Pindi[2] on certain volunteers:

[1] *Vide* Vol. XX, pp. 70-2.
[2] Rawalpindi

> It is brought to my notice that you took part (or were present) in the anti-Government propaganda being carried out in the R.Pindi Cantt. and because only such persons can reside in the Cantts. who are loyal to (*Khairkhah* of) the Government, you are hereby warned that if you are found being present in any such meeting in future, you will be recommended for being turned out of the Cantt. limits.

Thus, this Magistrate has made even attendance at meetings where anti-Government propaganda may be carried on a crime. Even co-operators sometimes carry on an anti-Government campaign. Multiplication of such orders will bring down the Government with the weight of its own enormity, even as a person suffering from obesity becomes at last incapable of walking.

Right of Residence Forbidden

A friend has sent the following notice issued by the District Magistrate of Noakhali on the 16th February:

> Whereas I am credibly informed that a certain building in the town of Noakhali called the "Swaraj Ashram" is being used for the harbouring of so-called volunteers who belong to an organization which has been declared unlawful by Government under the Criminal Law Amendment Act,
>
> And whereas I am credibly informed that the owner of the land on which this building stands is Babu Nalini Kanta Mukherjee and that the building was by his permission first of all occupied by Babu Promotha Nath Sen Gupta and thereafter turned into a home for the so-called volunteers,
>
> Now, therefore, I, O. M. Narain, District Magistrate of Noakhali, do call upon Babu Nalini Kanta Mukherjee, Babu Promotha Nath [Sen] Gupta, and the volunteers and other people, who are at present using or occupying this building or the land on which it stands, to show cause on the 18th of February 1922 at 12 noon in the Court of the District Magistrate of Noakhali why an order should not issue under Section 144 of the Code of Criminal Procedure forbidding the use of the said building or land for any purpose by the said volunteers on the following grounds:
>
> Firstly, that the said volunteers belong to an unlawful association and that the building is therefore being used for an unlawful purpose and
>
> Secondly, that the conduct of the volunteers using the building is a source of annoyance to the neighbourhood and a danger to the public tranquillity.

I do not know what happened on the day of the hearing of the notice, but it is worthy of note that the building in question could not be used by the volunteers "for any purpose", presum-

ably, therefore, even for mere residence apart from the volunteers' activities as such. The grounds upon which the notice was issued are also as strange as the notice itself. The Magistrate argues that as the volunteers belong to an unlawful association, the building occupied by them is used for an unlawful purpose. It follows from this that no landlord is safe in letting his property to any person whatsoever. How should he know if he is a potential thief or an actual sedition-monger?

The second reason is even more ludicrous than the first. How can the conduct of volunteers, whose only crime is open defiance of the Criminal Law Amendment Act, be a source of annoyance to the neighbourhood in which they reside and why should such volunteers not be imprisoned if they are a source of annoyance? The action of the Magistrate is almost like letting a thief alone and then charging the public with the task of punishing him by depriving him of shelter. It really amounts to teaching people Lynch Law.

Inciting to Assault

The retiring President of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce[1] has come out with the boldest declaration in favour of Lynch Law. He has found it necessary to throw off the mask of hypocrisy, laid down the law of racial superiority, dictated to the Moderates what they are expected to do and asked the Englishmen "to hit back hard when attacked". We cannot afford to answer this impudence in our chosen manner. That can only be done when we have become proof against provocation. For the time being, I must ask the Bengali friends voluntarily, deliberately and out of their strength to remain calm, unperturbed and non-resistant. To resort to civil disobedience out of anger will not only be contradictory conduct, but will be playing into the hands of the opponent. Let the District Magistrate of Noakhali and the Englishman who allows himself to be influenced by the incitements of the retiring President of the Bengal Chamber do their worst. The programme before us is to exhaust alike the District Magistrate and the Chamber President by receiving the blows in a dignified manner and without retaliation. The fury is bound then to return to itself for want of response.

Gwalior's Campaign against Gandhi Cap

A correspondent has sent me a copy of a notification by the Gwalior State signed by the Peshi Officer. It occupies nearly five

[1] Sir Robert Watson-Smythe

printed columns of a newspaper. It is a dissertation on khaddar. It goes on to say that there is no harm about the inhabitants of the Gwalior State using khaddar, that they always used to wear it and that, in view of the high prices of cloth, there was nothing strange in the people taking to khaddar wear, but the notification warns the people against attending lectures on khaddar, and finally prohibits in the following terms the use of the "Gandhi cap". The original is in Hindi.

> But it is necessary here to state that nowadays a particular type of khaddar cap has come into vogue which is in the form of a boat and whose two sides are capable of being folded. The fact is that such caps are not being used for economizing cloth, but it has become an emblem of a particular party and it has become so intimately connected with one class of views that it is believed that those who use it entertain those views. For these reasons, the use of such caps is improper. In this (prohibition) are not included caps of any other pattern whether they are made of khaddar or any other cloth.

I am sorry for this unnecessary prejudice against a harmless and cheap cap. I venture to inform the Gwalior authorities that, whilst it is true that many non-co-operators wear what are known as "Gandhi caps", there are thousands who wear them simply for convenience and cheapness, but who are no more non-co-operators than the Peshi Officer himself.

More Written Newspapers

Assam bids fair to beat every other province in the number of its written newspapers. Golaghat has now come out with a written weekly in Assamese. It gives the general news and smart editorial columns. I have been favoured with a translation of the third number of the issue which is called *Bande Mataram*. In the editorial notes, commenting upon an Anglo-Indian twitting us for desiring liberty by saying that even tigers and burglars desire liberty, the editor says:

> We do not want the meaning of liberty taught us by others. India insists upon becoming mistress in her own house. She does not want to become a mere student receiving lessons in liberty. She has under the bureaucratic system long enough remained under deception. She has now regained her consciousness and her eyes are opened.

I can only repeat to the editor and manager of this weekly the hope expressed in respect of other written newspapers, that there will be the strictest adherence to truth and there will be no

violent or provocative language used in connection with the new venture.

"OBJECTIONABLE" WIRES

It has evidently become the fashion nowadays to reject wires containing news of repression as objectionable. Here is one despatched by the Secretary, Sind Provincial Congress Committee, on the 22nd February, from Hyderabad:

> Repression in Sind is going on apace. In Sahiti District, where Section 108 has been freely applied, Mr. Gobindram has been sentenced to one year's rigorous and Mr. Khemchand, President, District Congress Committee and Editor, *Shakti*, is awaiting his trial. Mr. Dhaloomal, Sind provincial propagandist, has been arrested under same section. Latter's work in Nagarparker side of Tharparker District where evil system of Rasai, Begar and Lape prevailed, resulted in stoppage of evil, which proved too much for the local officials. Notices under Section 144 prohibiting addressing meetings within five miles of Mughulbin have been served on seven workers on the eve of a fair to prevent propaganda. Messrs Sobharaj and Wadhumal, Joint Secretaries, Shikarpur District Congress Committee, with seven others have been sentenced to rupees hundred fine or in default 3 months' simple for obstruction of road. The nine workers organized *Nagar-Keertan* with no intention of procession and as usual expecting no police interference, but sudden attention was paid to them by Shikarpur police. One paid fine, remaining preferred jail. City Magistrate, Karachi, has been invested with additional powers to require security for good conduct in case of Sedition Section 108, which means that the officials want to clear the ground by sweeping off workers before Prince comes to Karachi.

The following is a wire addressed to Hakimji[1] and sent from Raghunathpur by the President of the Sub-Divisional Congress Committee, Buxar:

> Inform Mahatmaji Congress camps pitched in Brahmapur fair for last two days forcibly pulled down yesterday night by Collector, Superintendent, Arrah, armed Gurkhas and Rameshwarsingh Deputy Collector, Resident Brahmapur. Volunteers brutally assaulted, forcibly removed with elephant help. Tents, flags, other articles taken away. Liquor, ganja volunteers cruelly beaten with *lathis*. Complete peace prevails.

The third has been received from Belsand. The Secretary, Thana Congress Committee, says:

[1] Hakim Ajmal Khan (1865-1927), physician and politician who took a leading part in the Khilafat Movement; President, Indian National Congress, 1921

The local Sub-Inspector of Police, Mr. Nath Sahay Roy, is nowadays bent upon provoking people to violence. On the 23rd February '22 he went to Pachra and Ath Koni villages, where the constables by his orders forcibly entered the Zenana houses of Babu Musafir Sinha, Bhubneshwar Sinha and Ram Briksh Mahto, volunteers, and took away utensils and water pots worth Rs. 15 from the houses of the former two, and one cage with a *pahari* parrot worth Rs. 10, one quilt worth Rs. 6, one dhoti worth Rs. 2-8, 4½ mds. of paddy seeds worth Rs. 18, 7 mds. of maize seeds worth Rs. 20, one *batook* (cooking pot) worth Rs. 11 and one she-goat with three kids worth Rs. 10, total amounting to Rs. 67-8-0, from the house of the latter. On the 25th February 1922, he went to Bhataulia to realize the fine from Mohammad Jan already in jail and forcibly entered the house of Shaikh Shabu Jan, his brother, whose household affairs are quite separate from Mohammad's for more than a year, and kicked the earthen granary (*kothi*) and took away 10 mds. of paddy seed worth Rs. 40, 1 md. and 5½ *paseris* of rice worth Rs. 9, and 1 *bedhua* (water pot) worth Rs. 5, total amounting to Rs. 54.

The three telegrams are important and contain details of repression. When Congress offices are burnt and looted, workers are sent to jail on one pretext or another, the temptation to civil resistance is irresistible, but I must warn workers against it. If they want a completely non-violent atmosphere, they must stop all aggressive activity for the time being. Let every person be his own Congress office and Khilafat office and let him confine himself to spreading the gospel of spinning and khaddar and, if nobody listens to him, I assure him that he will have done a good day's work if he will devote all his time to any of the cotton processes —carding, hand-spinning, hand-weaving. It is the one most useful and enduring thing about which there is no retracing and there is no possibility of mistake.

MISLEADING

Readers have besieged me with leaflets which the Propaganda Committee of W.I.N. Liberal Association has been distributing broadcast. I like its enthusiasm and activity. It does good and keeps non-co-operators up to the mark and shows them their bad side. I would only suggest to the Propaganda Committee that exaggeration would do it no good. I am sure it will not indulge in conscious exaggeration. I would therefore venture to correct some of the misstatements.

Leaflet No. 6 contains the following:

> What would India be like when Gandhi-Raj comes? . . .
> No Railways. No Hospitals. No Machinery. No army and navy will

> be wanted, because Gandhi will assure other nations that India would not interfere with them, and so they will not interfere with India!
>
> No laws necessary, no courts necessary, because everyone will be law unto himself. Everybody will be free to do what he likes. It will be a very easy life, because everybody will have to go about in a khaddar *langoti*[1] and sleep in the open.

I cannot say that this is an exaggeration. It is a clever caricature permissible in Western warfare. It is only suggestively false. Let me say what I mean. In the first instance, India is not striving to establish "Gandhi-Raj". It is in dead earnest to establish swaraj and would gladly and legitimately sacrifice Gandhi for the sake of winning swaraj. "Gandhi-Raj" is an ideal condition, and in that condition all the five negatives will represent a true picture, but under swaraj nobody ever dreams, certainly I do not dream, of no railways, no hospitals, no machinery, no army and navy, no laws and no law-courts. On the contrary, there will be railways; only they will not be intended for military or the economic exploitation of India, but they will be used for promoting internal trade and will make the lives of third-class passengers fairly comfortable. There will be some return made for the fares the third-class public pay. Nobody anticipates complete absence of diseases during swaraj; there will therefore certainly be hospitals, but one hopes that the hospitals will then be intended more for those who suffer from accidents than from self-indulgence. Machinery there certainly will be in the shape of spinning-wheel, which is after all a delicate piece of machinery, but I have no doubt that several factories will grow up in India under swaraj intended for the benefit of the people, not as now for draining the masses dry. I do not know of the navy, but I do know that the army of India of the future will not consist of hirelings to be utilized for keeping India under subjection and for depriving other nations of their liberty, but it would be largely cut down, will consist largely of volunteers and will be utilized for policing India. There will be law and law-courts also under swaraj, but they will be custodians of the people's liberty, not—as they now are—instruments in the hands of a bureaucracy which has emasculated and is intent upon further emasculating a whole nation. Lastly, whilst it will be optional for everybody who chooses to go about in a *langoti* and sleep in the open, let me hope that it will not be necessary, as it is today, for millions to go about with a dirty rag which serves for a *langoti* for want of the

[1] Loin cloth

means to buy sufficient clothing and to rest their weary and starved bodies in the open for want of a roof. It is not right therefore to tear some ideas expressed in *Indian Home Rule*[1] from their proper setting, caricature them and put them before the people as if I was preaching these ideas for anybody's acceptance.

In another pamphlet isolated acts of hooliganism, no doubt done by non-co-operators or their sympathizers, have been repeated as if they were the ordinary vocation of non-co-operators, and then follows the amazing summing-up:

> Non-co-operation is destruction, a falling back to the bad old days of bloody civil strife and confusion.

Non-co-operation is certainly partly destruction in so far as it is necessary, but not of the type of Bombay as suggested in the leaflet, but destruction of a vicious system by peaceful means, and I should very much like to know the bad old days of bloody civil strife and confusion. Is there any warrant in history for such a belief? I have known people sing of good old days. I have seen some verses in the vernacular text-books singing the praises of British rule at the expense of pre-British rule, but I do not know that there ever was a time when there was "bloody civil strife and confusion" throughout the length and breadth of India.

Progress of Khaddar in Bihar

The *Bihar Herald* is responsible for the following news:

> In the Land Revenue Administration Report of the Bihar and Orissa Government, it is recorded that in Patna, Bhagalpur and Tirhut, the levying of *abwabs*[2] has materially decreased with the growing knowledge among the tenantry of their rights, and that at Bhagalpur, the opposition to such extractions has been stiffened by the non-co-operation movement.
>
> The contribution of non-co-operation to the revival of the charkha and the weaving industry is noteworthy. In Bihar, according to official figures, three-eighths of the cloth worn is woven on the handloom. The charkha gave a further impetus to the weaving trade. In Patna, Tirhut, Orissa and Chota-Nagpur divisions, "Motia" cloth is being spun and woven with success. . . . An extended use of coarse cloth manufactured in country looms is evident . . . the weaving industry of Tasar in Navadah and "Daris", etc., in Aurangabad, continued to thrive.

The extract shows the steady progress made by constructive work in Bihar, a place where 3 years ago it would have been difficult to see a spinning-wheel anywhere or a yard of home-

[1] For the text of this book, *vide* Vol. X, pp. 6-68.

[2] Irrigation tax

spun khaddar. Only the poor people of Bihar know what a blessing the charkha has been to them.

An M.L.C. Resigns

Sjt. Sita Ram, a pleader of Kheri, sends me a copy of his resignation as a member of the Legislative Council of the United Provinces. The following is the text:

> It is with feelings of great regret that I beg to announce the resignation of my seat in the U.P. Legislative Council. It was after the announcement of the Reforms that I sought my election to the Council for the first time, and I had faith that the Reformed Government would be different from what it was in pre-Reform days and that the reign of terror and Dyerism would be a thing of the past and that there would be no more undue and undeserved repression in the country and that only guilty persons would be punished and that people would be able to do real service to the country by being returned to the Councils. The experience of one year has, however, belied all my hopes. I have seen that arrogance and haughtiness are much more in evidence in Council than respect and goodwill for others. Class and communal interests are still there. The experience of my own district has convinced me that there is still a place for Dyerism in the machinery of the Government. Mr. Young, Special Manager of the . . . Estate, committed acts tending to lead to breach of peace and tyrannized the entire population of . . . and the Government has not seen its way of doing any justice in the matter. Pundit Harkaran Nath Misra who preached non-violence to the people and directed the tenants to pay up their rents to their landlords and asked them not to resort to civil disobedience under the present circumstances, has been sentenced to three years' imprisonment. The recent arrests throughout the whole of India and particularly in these Provinces have led me to believe that the Government is determined on the policy of shutting up every person who believes in the real self-government of India. Unfortunately, my temperament is not such that I can remain a part and parcel of such a Government and hence I beg to tender the resignation of my seat.

He informs me that there are five candidates for the post. I do not envy the five candidates. Both Sjt. Sita Ram and they are right. Sjt. Sita Ram needed personal experience to show him the true nature of the reforms. The elected candidate, let me hope, will also learn by experience; but, even at the end of the chapter, there certainly will be some men who will honestly hold the opinion that, whether good or bad, it is only through the Councils that the British administrators give us that we shall make any

progress. For non-co-operators, the proceedings of the Councils and the Assembly ought to be a standing proof of the wisdom of their abstention.

Plea for Cool-headedness

Angry correspondence regarding Sir Robert Watson-Smythe's speech is streaming in. One correspondent advises me to give a full reply to that unfortunate speech. Another sends me a cutting with a covering letter in which he asks:

> Does it not represent the mentality of the average Englishman towards India, and if it does, should we not boldly ask them to clear out of India and leave the country exclusively to the children of the soil? Shall we be very much in the wrong to proclaim that our immediate object is to drive Englishmen out of India?

The correspondent says that he is an humble camp-follower in the movement. I must respectfully point out to him and those who may think like him that the mood represented in the foregoing paragraph ill-becomes a non-co-operator. Non-co-operation is a process of conversion and we have to convert by our model conduct even Britishers like Sir Robert Watson-Smythe. Whilst I am prepared to admit that the President of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce represents the mentality of the majority of Englishmen, there is a very respectable minority that certainly does not share the Smythian mentality. And so long as we have an Andrews, a Stokes[1], a Pearson[2] in our midst, so long will it be ungentlemanly on our part to wish every Englishman out of India. Nor is it otherwise necessary for us to take up the exclusive attitude suggested by the correspondent. I do not despair of Englishmen taking a sane view of things. After all, they are a practical people. They know how to make a virtue of necessity. What they will not yield to reason, they have been known to yield to force of circumstances, but I suggest to the correspondent that we should have some faith also in ourselves. Can we escape our share of blame for being treated like "dirt"? If we have hitherto been too weak to assert ourselves, too disunited to command attention to our wishes, and too selfish to sacrifice and too ignorant to understand the true interest of the country, is it any wonder if English traders, taking advantage of our weaknesses, have lorded it over us and have begun to think that they have a prescriptive

[1] Samuel Stokes, social worker and associate of C. F. Andrews

[2] William Winstanley Pearson, a missionary who collaborated with C. F. Andrews in Y.M.C.A. work; taught at Santiniketan for some time in 1914.

right not merely to remain in India but to command our labour as "hewers of wood and drawers of water"[?] The attitude taken up by the correspondent not only betrays anger, but it also betrays want of faith in ourselves. I venture, therefore, to think that the position that the Congress has taken up is the only dignified and feasible position. There is room enough for Englishmen and others in our country if they will live as friends and servants of the nation. There is no room for anyone, be he English or any other, if he wants to remain in India as lord and master. We must fight the demon of race superiority even though we might have to give a million lives. Let us also be humble enough to know that we are reaping the fruit of our own sinfulness. Have we not acted towards the untouchables of India as Englishmen of the Smythian type are behaving towards us?

Released

Pandit Jawaharlal, Moulvi Gulamatulla, Shaikh Shaukat Ali, Sjt. Mohanlal Saxena, Pandit Balmukund Bajpeyi, Dr. Sivraj Narain and Dr. L. Sahai have been prematurely released from the Lucknow Jail.[1] It is evident that the revising judge appointed by the U.P. Government has come to the conclusion that the convictions were wrong. God only knows how many of these convictions are totally wrong. But the plain fact today is that prisoners rather than feeling glad over their discharges are really grieved. Pandit Jawaharlal and his companions have my sympathy. The unregistered *Independent*[2] publishes the following message from him:

> What message can I give? I have been released, I don't know why. My father, a victim of asthma, and hundreds of my co-workers lie still in jail. I feel I have no right to be out of it. All I can say is: Fight on, work on for a free India. Let there be no respite, no forsaking of principles, for a false compromise. Follow our great leader Mahatma Gandhi and be true to the Congress. Be efficient, organized and, above all, remember the charkha and non-violence.

Not Extremist

The publicity Commissioner, U.P., writes from Lucknow saying that in his letter of the 15th February, the *Garhwali* of Dehra Dun was mentioned as an extremist journal by an oversight, and now writes to say that it is a moderate journal.

[1] Jawaharlal Nehru, along with other leaders, had been arrested on November 22, 1921.

[2] This was started in February 1919; *vide* Vol. XV, p. 81. The Government forfeited its security during the Non-co-operation Movement.

Petty Persecution

Babu Bimalanand Das Gupta, Dacca, who was arrested in connection with a public meeting held in Dacca on the 23rd January last and which was dispersed by force, was tried and discharged for want of evidence against him. That, however, was not enough for the authorities. He has now therefore received the following notice under Section 40 of the Legal Practitioners' Act:

> Whereas it has been reported to me by the Dist. Magistrate, Dacca, that Babu Bimalanand Das Gupta, M.A., B.L., a pleader of this Court, suspended his practice in July 1921 and engaged himself as a Professor of Economics in the Dacca National College so-called; and whereas it appears further that the said Bimalanand Das Gupta took such service without the permission of the High Court; and whereas further it appears from the report of the Dist. Magistrate that the said Bimalanand Das Gupta was present and took part in a meeting held at Dacca on the 29th January 1922, in contravention of orders made by the Dist. Magistrate, Dacca, under Sec. 144 Cr. P. C.;
>
> And whereas it appears further that the said Bimalanand Das Gupta, when he was tried for an offence under Section 188 I.P.C., stated to the Court that he owed no allegiance to the British and had no regard for the post held by the trying Magistrate; and whereas it appears that the said Bimalanand Das Gupta has thereby been guilty of gross professional misconduct;
>
> It is hereby ordered that the said Bimalanand Das Gupta do show cause on or before the 7th March, why he should not be reported to the High Court for dismissal or suspension from practice.

Thus the farce that was begun with Mr. Sherwani[1] is being repeated at Dacca. The Judge who has issued the notice does not seem to have appreciated the humour of the situation. Those who have suspended practice are not likely to go back to the courts till swaraj is attained. That after the attainment of swaraj all the legal practitioners who have suspended will revert to their practice if they choose follows as a matter of course. What then can be the effect of the notice save that it exposes the Court to further ridicule and furnishes the public with an additional reason for boycotting courts which are used for punishing (I use the word "punishing" as the issuing Judge flatters himself with the belief that he awarded a punishment by disbarring a lawyer who

[1] T. A. K. Sherwani, who was in charge of the National Muslim University, had given up legal practice. He was arrested soon after the disturbances in Aligarh and lodged in Naini Jail near Allahabad. *Vide* also Vol. XXII, pp. 130-1 & 353.

has suspended practice) lawyers not for any unprofessional conduct but for holding certain political opinions no matter how strong or extreme. I should not be surprised if this notice served upon Babu Bimalanand results in stiffening his brother-practitioners of Dacca and making some of them at least leave the law-courts, even if it is by way of protest against courts being turned into engines of political oppression.

A Blessing

Borodada (Dwijendranath Tagore)[1] sends me a beautiful little letter covering the following lines :

> My views concerning the speeding and slackening motion of the Great Vessel which is just now bearing in its bosom the earnest prayers of the sons and daughters of India for the advent of a new era of peace and good-will to mankind in this travailing earth of ours.
>
> A wise captain slackens the speed of his vessel whilst moving in the right direction, whenever it arrives at a spot abounding in dangerous rocks, and speeds his vessel as soon as he enters into the open sea which is free from all sorts of such impediments. But a foolish captain steers his vessel in a wrong direction for fear of rocks, where there is no such thing whatever under the sea, and proceeds towards an unknown region where hidden rocks are lying in wait to shatter his vessel into fragments the moment it approaches their dwelling place.
>
> Mahatma Gandhi is guiding his vessel in the former way, while his advisers want him to take the latter course.

I hope that at the end of the chapter it will be possible to say that I was "a wise captain". I can truthfully say that I have never in my life been so storm-tossed as I am at the present moment. I have hitherto flattered myself with the belief that I have a fair measure of my capacity as also my limitations, but just now I seem to be in deeper waters than I should care to find myself in. The prayers, therefore, and blessings of one so pure and so good as Borodada are most welcome to me at this juncture.

Terrible If True

A correspondent, who sends in his name for my information but signs himself as "Punjab Nationalist", writes as follows :

> In your issue of the 16th instant you write as follows:[2]
>
> "The Sikh awakening seems to be truly wonderful. Not only has

[1] Elder brother of Rabindranath Tagore

[2] *Vide* Vol. XXII, p. 414.

the Akali party become a party of effective non-violence, but it is evolving a fine code of honour. The Gurudwara Committee is now insisting on the release of Pandit Dina Nath, a non-Sikh, who was arrested in connection with the keys affair."

It seems you are not aware of the facts, or you will probably pause before labelling the warlike Akali party as one of "effective non-violence". The overbearing and disorderly conduct of Akali bands in Hoshiarpur District has necessitated sending military posse down there. At a meeting held at Bilaspur the other day within two miles of Hoshiarpur, about 2,000 Akalis were present. Rows of men with drawn swords formed themselves round a centre where the speakers were. The orators declared valiantly there was no government and that an Akali according to a prophecy would come from Kabul and, overpowering all opposition, establish himself on the throne of Delhi, and at a given signal expressed readiness to start revolutionary operations. The Akalis in Hoshiarpur have a commissariat and an intelligence service of their own; they employ camel *sawars* to watch what is going on. A large crowd gathered together outside the Court of a Magistrate engaged in political cases at Gaurishanker and demanded the surrender of prisoners at their own terms.

The pledge of non-violence has now been omitted from the vow of the Akalis; and the service they undertook was not exclusively confined to the Gurudwara Reform. The meetings are the order of the day, and the substitution of the Sikh rule for the present Government is frankly put forward. Advices from Ludhiana declare that bands of Sikh enthusiasts march to the Diwans with much pomp and parade, carrying swords and axes and hammers. They march through the bazars in regular formation, and, when travelling in large numbers by railway, they refuse to pay for their tickets, sometimes even claiming the privilege of free travel, as they foolishly imagine that the country is theirs. At Samnala the Akali speakers declared: "King George V is not our king. Sardar Kharak Singh is our uncrowned king." Some men of the 23rd Pioneers returning from leave in the Kusur Tehsil have complained that they were threatened by the Akalis with the molestation of their women if they did not forthwith desert the Army and join the ranks of the Khalsa. These are, in short, some of the terrible facts which should persuade you to revise your opinion regarding the non-violent character of the awakening of the Sikhs in the central parts of the Punjab.

The letter has startled me. The report seems to me to be unbelievable, but as my correspondent claims accuracy for his report and as I have paid a glowing tribute to Sikh non-violence, I have not hesitated to publish the report, but I refrain from making any comments till I have heard from the Sikh friends to whom I have already written about the matter,

Case for Searching Inquiry

After having dealt with the "Punjab Nationalist's" charges against the Akalis, I came upon a letter from a well-known resident of Feni in Noakhali district. He has given his full name and address. He has not asked me to keep his name back from publication, but I purposely refrain from giving the name as, if the facts set forth in his letter are true, he is likely to be subjected to ill treatment for having dared to tell the truth. The letter which is dated the 16th February reads as follows :

> I beg to bring to your notice the present condition of the Feni Subdivision in the district of Noakhali. Although I am not a non-co-operator, I have regard for you. Your movement was proclaimed as non-violent. But the violence of the followers has far exceeded the bearable limit. There is no peace and order and no respect for the elders. Bad characters of the villages have a golden opportunity to carry on their professions and have joined the Volunteer Corps. There is none to check them. The country is now in the hands of these men. Money is squeezed from the poor sellers and stall-keepers on every *hut*[1] day. The poor who can ill-afford to have two meals a day have to give one handful of rice every morning and evening; otherwise they are molested. The unfortunate men who are not non-co-operators are subjected to social boycott, attacked with night-soil, house burning, criminal intimidation, assault, pelting of stones, and the like. There is no freedom of speech for them. I give below instances of violence for your information:
>
> 1. Moulvi Nural Huq, Vakil, High Court, Mr. Ali Haider Chaudhry, and Babu Jashada Kumar Ghosh were attacked with night-soil, because they stood as candidates for the Council.
>
> 2. Munshi Mahommed Wasil, and Munshi Reazuddin Ahmed, clerk, Civil Court, were brutally assaulted and insulted in bazar because they refused to hand over their caps to the volunteers.
>
> 3. Reazuddin Munshi's Bazar, Peer Buksh Munshi's Bazar, Daroga Mahommed Ama's Bazar, and many other bazars were forcibly closed and buyers and sellers were not allowed to meet on the bazar because the proprietors of these bazars are not non-co-operators.
>
> 4. Local Sub-Divisional Officer and other leading gentlemen were molested and their motor cars were forcibly stopped in several places; stones and dust were thrown at them on many occasions.
>
> 5. House of a village gentleman was set on fire and he was intimidated in other ways because he helped the S.D.O. and his companion when his motor car was forcibly stopped.

[1] *Hat*, weekly market in rural areas

> 6. Repeated attempts were made to burn Khan Saheb's house and at last his house was burnt down to ashes and then the labourers were prevented by intimidation from working in his *busha* and constructing the house.
>
> 7. Intimidation to the co-operators by means of anonymous letters, posters and publicly exciting people against them.
>
> 8. Khan Saheb was not allowed to cross a *khal* (stream) even over bamboo bridge and he was publicly insulted. There are numerous other instances. These are plain truths and I challenge anybody to disprove these facts. Local Congress and Khilafat workers do not take any action, but rather seem to take pride because they have authority to do anything they wish. I appeal to you in the name of humanity to kindly hold an enquiry, sincerely believing that you will not allow this state of things to go unchecked and will allow those who do not follow your creed, a place under the sun to live peacefully.

I have removed from the letter only one or two passages which seemed to me to be unnecessary. Hitherto, I have at times received complaints against non-co-operators and have not hesitated to publish them or otherwise deal with them, to ascertain the truth of the charges contained therein. In many cases they have proved to be exaggerated. In some they have proved to be unjustified, but strangely enough, I am receiving specific charges which the author offers to prove. Under the heading "In Cold Blood"[1], I have had the misfortune to publish from week to week tales of terrible repression in Bengal, Assam, U.P., Punjab, Andhra and elsewhere. Reports continue to arrive, from one or other of these places, of studied repression, but I have flattered myself with the belief that, *on the whole*, non-co-operators could show a clean slate. The Noakhali news therefore is a rude shock. I am prepared for receiving contradictions, but there is so much wealth of detail in the correspondent's letter that the substance of the charges is likely to be well-founded. The writer asks me to hold an inquiry. I wish I had the time and the authority to do so, but I invite all the non-co-operation workers, both in the Congress and in the Khilafat Committees, to meet these charges. I would like them to send me a letter for publication, brief and to the point, not hesitating to make a clean, emphatic confession where the charges can be sustained. I invite also the Provincial Congress Committee to take up the matter immediately, to depute one or two Commissioners and to make a full and exhaustive inquiry. They do not need the name of the correspondent who has frankly

[1] This featured in *Young India*, in January-February 1920.

given the names of those who, he holds, have been persecuted. An inquiry therefore is a simple matter. Meanwhile, as I know that publication is also half the remedy, I gladly place the columns of *Young India* at the disposal of those who can send authentic instances of intimidation, coercion, assaults, social boycott by or on behalf of non-co-operators whether Congressmen or Khilafatists. Indeed, every Congressman is a Khilafatist, and every Khilafatist is a Congressman, but since we have two organizations in the country, I appeal to both to be merciless in exposing our own wrongdoing. I could find a thousand excuses for the wrong-doing of the administrators if only because we impute to them nothing better, whereas we claim to be immaculate so far as non-violence and honesty are concerned. We shall bring the struggle to a successful issue far more quickly by being strict with ourselves. There is no excuse whatsoever for intimidation, coercion, assault or social boycott on our part. I would urge the correspondents, who may send me letters of complaints, to be brief, strictly accurate and to write in a clear hand on one side of the paper only. It is not an easy matter to go through the heavy correspondence pouring in from day to day. Compliance with this simple request will ensure quicker attention. Correspondents will take care to avoid vague generalizations. Specific details as in the Noakhali letter are absolutely necessary to inspire belief and to assist inquiry.

The Value of Word of Honour

Mr. Subramanya Siva has sent the following explanation in response to my invitation[1] published in *Young India* about his reported apology:

> The Government *communique* relating to my release is likely t make many of my countrymen misunderstand me and my present positior Mahatmaji himself writing in *Young India* wants me to clear myself b making a full statement. I have already explained myself in *The Hindu* c the 20th January last. The following is my explanation:
>
> The *communique* is so worded as to mean that the Governmer released me because of my undertaking. But the order to the Superintende of the Central Jail at Trichinopoly ran thus:
>
> "Under Section (some Section) of the Criminal Procedure Code, t Governor-in-Council is pleased to remit the unexpired portion of t sentence of convict Subramanya Siva unconditionally."
>
> It is plain from the word "unconditionally" in the order that n thing about the undertaking or any condition is mentioned and that t

[1] *Vide* Vol. XXII, pp. 362-3.

recommendations of the Surgeon-General and the District Medical Officer ought to have been the chief cause of my release. No condition has been imposed upon me; and I am as free as before to work in any way I like, I wish to inform my countrymen.

A word as to my undertaking. Soon after my conviction I fell so seriously ill in the jail that I, in addition to suffering from high fever, was passing endless diarrhoea motions every day, so much so that at times I fell into delirium and my life was despaired of. It was at that time I wrote an undertaking to the Government that if I were to be released, I shall refrain from politics in future. This may be considered a weak act on my part by certain people. But if the circumstances and the time in which I wrote were taken into consideration, I believe I am surely entitled to be excused. "Even Homer nods", man is liable to err; and I am no God. I have every right to expect my countrymen who have been watching my life ever since 1905 to slight this small past weakness of mine.

Though one would wish that people even suffering tortures would not tender apologies, it is not open to outsiders to criticize the conduct of those who weaken under physical suffering. Mr. Siva therefore rightly appeals to the public not to judge him harshly for having tendered the apology. But the point is that the apology having once been tendered and a promise given, it should have been faithfully carried out. Mr. Subramanya Siva is not entitled to take advantage of the word "unconditionally" occurring in the order of remission. It is a mark of confidence in the probity of a non-co-operator. Surely the Government were quite justified in believing that Mr. Siva would abide by his written word. I wish non-co-operators to earn the credit for being above reproach so far as truth and non-violence are concerned. This struggle depends for its success solely upon the acquisition of a moral prestige which can only be built up by scrupulous regard for honesty under all circumstances. Instead of taking the advantage that Mr. Siva wishes to take of the unconditional pardon, he should really recognize in this act at least the generosity of the Government in not having humiliated him by referring to the apology. I cannot close this painful subject without appealing to Mr. Subramanya Siva even now to make a public declaration that he will strictly refrain from taking part in politics and apologizing that he ever departed from the undertaking he gave. I am sure that neither he nor the public will lose by his strict adherence to his promise. There is a vast scope for him to do social and economic work. He can do a great deal of khaddar work in its purely economic and moral aspects.

A Wife's Congratulations

Mr. Abdur Rahman Ghazi of Lyallpur wrote as follows whilst his case was being heard :

> Before I select a cosy corner in the Swaraj Mandir, I leave these few lines with a friend of mine to send them on to you. The case as usual is a huge farce. I have been run in under Section 108. The witnesses are all interested parties. The utter demoralization of the present Government is made clear to me by this case. The Press telegrams pertaining to it have been held up. You will be glad to know what my wife writes about the case:
>
> "Congratulations on your arrest. Thank God, the much-longed-for day is come, and God has accepted your sacrifice. We are all very happy. May you cheerfully suffer for your country and your religion, and may the Almighty arm us with sufficient strength to bear hardships for our cause."
>
> Now I gladly await the orders of the National Parliament for my release.

The foregoing was written on the 26th January. It makes somewhat sad reading on the 4th of March when the National Parliament seems to be not quite so near as it certainly appeared to be on the 26th of January. To a soldier, however, it matters not when the battle is won. To him it only matters that he should stand to his post. In my opinion, the only dignified release must be by the first Act of the Swaraj Parliament or by efflux of time and I certainly do not lose hope of the prisoners being released by national strength if the revised Bardoli programme of construction can be successfully carried out.

Calcutta's Unreadiness

A correspondent in the course of a letter from Calcutta writes :

> My mind compels me to say that Bengal is doing nothing about swadeshi in comparison to the neighbouring province of Bihar. It is lagging far behind. Even those who boast themselves of being volunteers are not clad in khaddar. I have travelled through almost all the important quarters of this great town, but have not found a single person clad in khaddar. In Bihar, on the other hand, you will rarely find a man wearing foreign cloth. In the villages they have not yet begun to wear khaddar dhoties, but the attempt is being made to replace mill-made dhoties with khaddar ones.

I have merely given a few extracts from the correspondent's letter. He goes on to say that, if Calcutta's unpreparedness is reflected in the villages of Bengal also, the battle of satyagraha

cannot be won. This letter is supported by several others, but I am not prepared to admit that, even in Calcutta, no progress has been done in the khaddar movement. At the same time, I fear that the charge against Calcutta is mainly true. Khaddar wear in Calcutta is rather an exception than the rule, and there is no denying the fact that full satyagraha is impossible without full compliance with the conditions precedent. If we are to usher in peaceful swaraj—and swaraj attained by peaceful means must be peaceful swaraj—we must be as ready for construction as we seem to be for destruction. Boycott and manufacture, evacuation and occupation, disobedience and obedience must go hand in hand, if we are to avoid an interval of confusion, anarchy and civil strife. The khaddar movement is the largest part of construction. We dare not neglect it if the struggle is to remain non-violent to the end.

Interesting Information

Though now stale, the report issued by Messrs Prakasam, Nageshwara Row and Narayan Rao about the preparedness for mass civil disobedience of the areas selected by the Guntur District Congress Committee makes interesting reading. The Commissioners divide the area into two parts : Peddanandipadu Firka and all the neighbouring villages forming one contiguous whole, and the second the rest of the Firkas consisting of Palnad, Vinukonda, Settanapalle and portions of Ongole, Narasaraopet, Tennali and Repalle. The Commissioners found that the second part of the selected area fully satisfied the conditions about khaddar but not so about untouchability, although there was a great advance in the mentality of the people. As to non-violence, whilst the Commissioners admit that the people are non-violent by temperament, they say : "Still we doubt whether they could withstand a provocation or insult if it is of an extreme nature." They found that the condition about Hindu-Muslim unity was largely fulfilled.

Of the first part of the area, the Commissioners are much more enthusiastic. They estimate the total number of volunteers at about 4,000.

> They are clad in khaddar uniform with badges. Men of all ages have enlisted themselves. We found even men of 60 to 65 years doing active work. In some villages there were *Panchama* volunteers doing active work and freely mixing with others. The excellence of the organization among these ryots consists in their devotion to duty and observance of non-violence as part of their religion.

As to khaddar, the Commissioners remark :

Most of the villages are self-contained. In some almost every house has one or more charkhas actually working. The yarn made in each village is woven generally by the village *Panchamas*. Even orthodox Brahmins have been getting their clothes made by their *Panchama* brethren. In most of the villages more than 50 per cent wear khaddar made by themselves. In some the percentage is as high as 95.

Remarking upon untouchability, they say :

We were surprised at the extraordinary progress made by some of the villages in this area in their attempt to remove untouchability within so short a time. We could not believe that it was humanly possible to effect such a revolution in the minds of these countrymen of ours. We found the so-called untouchables admitted into the Panchayat Board. In some places orthodox Brahmins took the *Panchamas* by hand and seated them in their midst, and in some places they are admitted into the premises of Brahmins to do the same services which other castes have been doing. One rich Brahmin gentleman told us that he and some of his friends in the neighbouring villages would spend all their income to make provision for their needy *Panchama* brethren.

Their final opinion, however, is :

In some villages untouchability has ceased to exist and in several it is likely to disappear soon. We consider the progress not uniform and not sufficient.

Their final summing-up is :

No doubt all this is a good record, but it is difficult to see how far the masses can remain absolutely peaceful if more drastic and inhuman measures are employed. The time at their disposal for discipline has been too short. They have been just at the beginning of the fight. We consider it more advisable to postpone the campaign until the people have sufficient time to steel their hearts against all engines of oppression.

I have given relevant extracts from this valuable report to show : (1) the utter impartiality with which the Commissioners approach their mission, (2) the marvellous progress made in the selected area in fulfilling the conditions laid down by the Congress, (3) the necessity for much greater work before the idea of civil disobedience could be approached with any confidence. I am aware that extraordinary efforts were being put forth in many parts of India for due fulfilment of the Congress conditions in order that the people might be able to exercise the privilege of civil disobedience. That in itself is certainly a matter for congratulation, but the work of construction ought not to have to depend upon

stimulation. It must go on irrespective of the excitement of civil disobedience. Removal of untouchability, manufacture of khaddar, Hindu-Muslim unity, cultivation of non-violence are not measures of a temporary character. They are the four pillars on which the structure of swaraj must for ever rest. Take away any one of them and it must topple down. The greater, therefore, the progress in these four matters, the nearer we are to swaraj, and the nearer also to capacity for civil disobedience. Indeed, even disobedience, if it is truly civil, excludes the idea of excitement. When Daniel threw open his doors in defiance of the laws of Medes and Persians, when John Bunyan became a non-conformist, when Latimer thrust his hand into the fire, when Prahlad embraced the red-hot iron pillar, not one of these civil resisters of old resisted under excitement. On the contrary they were, if possible, more collected and deliberate than on ordinary occasions. Absence of excitement is an infallible test of civil disobedience. I therefore hope that the good people of the selected area will not go to sleep now that mass civil disobedience has been suspended, but that they will go on with the programme of construction with greater zeal and devotion.

A WIFE'S FAITH

Mrs. Stokes in writing to Mr. Andrews says :

> I know it well that when my husband is in jail with many other sons of India, suffering for the sake of righteousness, he is sure to be happy. I am quite confident that the Almighty God will hear the cry of the oppressed and deliver His judgement.

The reader will be glad to hear that Mr. Stokes is happy and well in his prison. He is occasionally seen by friends in Lahore.

Young India, 9-3-1922

16. ILLUSTRATION OF LAXITY

TO THE EDITOR, *Young India*

SIR,

If I can be allowed to say a word or two in connection with your article "Our Laxity"[1] in the last issue, I beg to state as follows:

I believe, at least from my personal experience in the C.P., that the vast majority of the volunteers do not conform to the Congress conditions

[1] *Vide* Vol. XXII, pp. 463-5.

because the recruiting officers themselves are careless in observing the principles laid down by the Ahmedabad Congress. It is highly regrettable, while revered persons like Deshbandhu Das, Lalaji, Panditji Nehru and others (now in gaols) are shouting out at the top of their voice that it is sinful for Indians to wear anything but khaddar, the Congress workers at several places are yet ashamed of wearing short khaddar dhotis instead of their mill or *videshi* dhotis. Even many of the leaders who appear on platforms to deliver speeches, I am pained to say, are seen in their old *videshi* or mill clothes.

So under the circumstances, I think the public is entitled to have your advice over this vital question of dealing with the elected representatives and office-bearers who do not abide (as stated above) by the Congress mandate.

HANSAPURI
NAGPUR,
28-2-'22

Yours, etc.,
MANCHERSHAW RUSTOMJI AVARI

The Delhi resolution is quite clear on the subject and expects all office-bearers to wear nothing but hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar.

Young India, 9-3-1922

17. THE DEATH DANCE

Why is there this chorus of condemnation of the doubling of the salt tax and other taxes on the necessaries of life? Wonder is expressed that now there is no apology even offered for the terrific military charges of sixty-two crores. The fact is, it is impossible to offer apology for the inevitable. The military charges must grow with the growing consciousness of the nation. The military is *not* required for the defence of India. But it *is* required for the forcible imposition of the English exploiters upon India. That is the naked truth. Mr. Montagu has bluntly but honestly stated it. The retiring President of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce has said it and so has the Governor of Bombay. They want to trade with us not upon our terms, but upon their terms.

It is the same thing whether it is done with the kid glove on or without it. The Councils are the kid glove. We must pay for the glove. The reforms hang upon us like an incubus. They cover a multitude of defects including the blood-sucking salt tax.

They say to us: "We propose to hold India whether you wish it or not." We believe that all this is for our good. We think we

cannot keep from fighting one another without the protecting power of the British arms. And so, being afraid to die at the hands of our brothers, we are content to live as bondmen.

It would be a thousand times better for us to be ruled by a military dictator than to have the dictatorship concealed under sham councils and assemblies. They prolong the agony and increase the expenditure. If we are so anxious to live, it would be more honourable to face the truth and submit to unabashed dictation than to pretend that we are slowly becoming free. There is no such thing as slow freedom. Freedom is like a birth. Till we are fully free, we are slaves. All birth takes place in a moment.

What is this dread of the Congress but the dread of the coming freedom? The Congress has become a grim reality. And therefore it has to be destroyed, law or no law. If only sufficient terror can be struck into the hearts of the people, the exploitation can last another century. It is another question whether India itself can last that time under the growing strain or whether the people must during that time die like flies. When a man begins to eat a cocoanut, he is not called upon to be tender to the kernel. When he has carved out the last bit, he throws away the shell. We do not consider it a heartless performance. No more does the trader consider what he takes from the helpless buyer. A heartless performance—there never is any heart about it. The trader takes all he can and goes his way. It is all a matter of bargain.

The councillors want their fares and extras, the ministers their salaries, the lawyers their fees, the suitors their decrees, the parents such education for their boys as would give them status in the present life, the millionaires want facilities for multiplying their millions and the rest their unmanly peace. The whole revolves beautifully round the central corporation. It is a giddy dance from which no one cares to free himself and so, as the speed increases, the exhilaration is the greater. But it is a death dance and the exhilaration is induced by the rapid heartbeat of a patient who is about to expire.

The expenditure is bound to grow so long as the dance continues. I should not be surprised if the increase is also laid upon the broad shoulders of non-co-operators. For them there is only one lesson. They may look upon the increase with philosophic calmness if they will be but true to their creed. The only way they can prevent it, the only way it will ever be prevented is the way of non-violence. For the greatest part of non-co-operation is withdrawal from the organized violence on which the Government is based. If we want to organize violence to match that of the

Government, we must be prepared to incur greater expenditure even than the latter. We may not convince all the dancers of the fatal doom awaiting them, but we must be able to convince the masses who take part in it and sell their freedom to buy so-called peace. This we can only do by showing them that non-violence is the way to freedom—not the forced non-violence of the slave, but the willing non-violence of the brave and the free.

Young India, 9-3-1922

18. *IF I AM ARRESTED*

The rumour has been revived that my arrest is imminent.[1] It is said to be regarded as a mistake by some officials that I was not arrested when I was to be, i.e., on the 11th or 12th of February and that the Bardoli decision ought not to have been allowed to affect the Government's programme. It is said, too, that it is now no longer possible for the Government to withstand the ever-rising agitation in London for my arrest and deportation. I myself cannot see how the Government can avoid arresting me if they want a permanent abandonment of civil disobedience, whether individual or mass.

I advised the Working Committee to suspend mass civil disobedience at Bardoli because that disobedience would not have been civil, and if I am now advising all provincial workers to suspend even individual civil disobedience, it is because I know that any disobedience at the present stage will be not civil but criminal. A tranquil atmosphere is an indispensable condition of civil disobedience. It is humiliating for me to discover that there is a spirit of violence abroad and that the Government of the United Provinces has been obliged to enlist additional police for avoiding a repetition of Chauri Chaura. I do not say that all that is claimed to have happened has happened, but it is impossible to ignore all the testimony that is given in proof of the growing spirit of violence in some parts of those provinces. In spite of my political differences with Pandit Hridayanath Kunzru[2], I regard him to be above wilful perversion of truth. I consider him to be

[1] Gandhiji was arrested at Ahmedabad after 10 p.m. on March 10, under Section 124, Indian Penal Code.

[2] Dr. Hriday Nath Kunzru (b. 1887); President of the Servants of India Society since 1936 and of the Indian Council of World Affairs since 1948

one of the most capable among public workers. He is not a man to be easily carried away. When, therefore, he gives an opinion upon anything, it immediately arrests my attention. Making due allowance for the colouring of his judgement by reason of his pro-Government attitude, I am unable to dismiss his report of the Chauri Chaura tragedy as unworthy of consideration. Nor is it possible to ignore letters received from zemindars and others informing me of the violent temperament and ignorant lawlessness in the United Provinces. I have before me the Bareilly report signed by the Congress Secretary. Whilst the authorities behaved like madmen and forgot themselves in their fit of anger, we are not, if that report is to be believed, without fault. The volunteer procession was not a civil demonstration. It was insisted upon in spite of a sharp division of opinion in our own ranks. Though the crowds that gathered were not violent, the spirit of the demonstration was undoubtedly violent. It was an impotent show of force wholly unnecessary for our purpose and hardly a prelude to civil disobedience. That the authorities could have handled the procession in a better spirit, that they ought not to have interfered with the swaraj flag, that they ought not to have objected to the use of the Town Hall, which was town property, as Congress offices in view of the fact that it had been so used for some months with the permission of the Town Council, is all very true. But we have ceased to give credit to the authorities for common or reasonable sense. On the contrary, we have set ourselves against them because we expect nothing but unreason and violence from them, and knowing that the authorities would act no better than they did, we should have refrained from all the previous irritating demonstrations. That the U.P. Government are making a mountain out of a mole-hill, that they are discounting their own provocation and the provocation given by the murdered men at Chauri Chaura is nothing new. All that I am concerned with is that it is not possible for us to claim that we have given them no handle whatsoever. It is therefore as a penance that civil disobedience has been suspended. But if the atmosphere clears up, the people realize the full value of the adjective "civil" and become in reality non-violent both in spirit and in deed, and if I find that the Government still do not yield to the people's will, I shall certainly be the first person to advocate individual or mass civil disobedience as the case may be. There is no escape from that duty without the people wishing to surrender their birthright.

I doubt the sincerity of Englishmen who are born fighters when they declaim against civil disobedience as if it was a diabolical

crime to be punished with exemplary severity. If they have glorified armed rebellions and resorted to them on due occasions, why are many of them up in arms against the very idea of civil resistance? I can understand their saying that the attainment of a non-violent atmosphere is a virtual impossiblity in India. I do not believe it, but I can appreciate such an objection. What, however, is beyond my comprehension is the deadset made against the very theory of civil disobedience as if it was something immoral. To expect me to give up the preaching of civil disobedience is to ask me to give up preaching peace, which would be tantamount to asking me to commit suicide.

I have now been told that the Government are compassing the destruction of the three weeklies which I am conducting, viz., *Young India*, Gujarati *Navajivan* and *Hindi Navajivan*. I hope that the rumour has no foundation. I claim that these three journals are insistently preaching nothing but peace and goodwill. Extraordinary care is taken to give nothing but truth, as I find it, to the readers. Every inadvertent inaccuracy is admitted and corrected. The circulation of all the weeklies is daily growing. The conductors are voluntary workers, in some cases, taking no salary whatsoever and in the others receiving mere maintenance money. Profits are all returned to the subscribers in some shape or other, or are utilized for some constructive public activity or other. I cannot say that I shall not feel a pang if these journals cease to exist. But it is the easiest thing for the Government to put them out. The publishers and printers are all friends and co-workers. My compact with them is that the moment Government ask for security, that moment the newspapers must stop. I am conducting them upon the assumption that, whatever view the Government may take of my activities, they at least give me credit for preaching through these newspapers nothing but the purest non-violence and truth according to my lights.

I hope, however, that whether the Government arrest me or whether they stop by direct or indirect means the publication of the three journals, the public will remain unmoved. It is a matter of no pride or pleasure to me but one of humiliation that the Government refrain from arresting me for fear of an outbreak of universal violence and awful slaughter that any such outbreak must involve. It would be a sad commentary upon my preaching of, and upon the Congress and Khilafat pledge of, non-violence, if my incarceration was to be a signal for a storm all over the country. Surely, it would be a demonstration of India's unreadiness for a peaceful rebellion. It would be a triumph for the bureaucracy, and it

would be almost a final proof of the correctness of the position taken up by the Moderate friends, viz., that India can never be prepared for non-violent disobedience. I hope, therefore, that the Congress and Khilafat workers will strain every nerve and show that all the fears entertained by the Government and their supporters were totally wrong. I promise that such act of self-restraint will take us many a mile towards our triple goal.

There should therefore be no hartals, no noisy demonstrations, no processions. I would regard the observance of perfect peace on my arrest as a mark of high honour paid to me by my countrymen. What I would love to see, however, is the constructive work of the Congress going on with clockwork regularity and the speed of the Punjab Express. I would love to see people who have hitherto kept back, voluntarily discarding all their foreign cloth and making a bonfire of it. Let them fulfil the whole of the constructive programme framed at Bardoli, and they will not only release me and other prisoners, but they will also inaugurate swaraj and secure redress of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs. Let them remember the four pillars of swaraj: non-violence, Hindu-Muslim-Sikh-Parsi-Christian-Jew unity, total removal of untouchability and manufacture of hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar completely displacing foreign cloth.

I do not know that my removal from their midst will not be a benefit to the people. In the first instance, the superstition about the possession of supernatural powers by me will be demolished. Secondly, the belief that people have accepted the non-co-operation programme only under my influence and that they have no independent faith in it will be disproved. Thirdly, our capacity for swaraj will be proved by our ability to conduct our activities in spite of the withdrawal even of the originator of the current programme. Fourthly and selfishly, it will give me a quiet and physical rest, which perhaps I deserve.

Young India, 9-3-1922

19. DESHBHAKTA'S ARREST

Just at the time of going to the press, I received the telegraphic news that Deshbhakta Konda Venkatappayya has been arrested. He is the greatest and the best among the Andhras. His fault was that he loved India better than his ease. I congratulate the Deshbhakta and the Andhra friends. This great servant of the nation will have well-earned rest and the cause will prosper in spite of his withdrawal from our midst. For though his body can be imprisoned by the Government, they cannot take away his spirit from our midst.

Young India, 9-3-1922

20. FOREIGN PROPAGANDA

I see that there is a great deal of misunderstanding about the scope of foreign propaganda undertaken by the Working Committee. I see that it was a mistake not to have published the report that was adopted by the Working Committee. Here it is:

TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE WORKING COMMITTEE OF
THE ALL-INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE, DELHI

SIR,

At the meeting of the Working Committee held at Surat on 31st January last, the following Resolution was passed:

"The Working Committee records its firm conviction that dissemination of correct news about Indian political situation in foreign countries is absolutely essential and refers to Mahatma Gandhi all the correspondence on the subject of foreign propaganda now with the Working Secretary with a request that he should prepare a definite scheme in that behalf at an early date so as to enable the next meeting of the Working Committee to consider it."

Having considered the resolution and the papers forwarded to me by the Secretary, I beg to report as follows:

In my opinion it is not only undesirable but it may prove even harmful to establish at the present stage any Agency in any foreign country for the dissemination of correct news in such country about the political situation in India, for the following reasons:

First, because it would distract public attention and instead of making the people feel that they have to rely purely on their own strength

it will make them think of the effect of their actions on foreign countries and the support the latter can render to the national cause. This does not mean that we do not care for the world's support, but the way to gain that support is to insist upon the correctness of every one of our actions and rely upon the automatic capacity of Truth to spread itself.

Secondly, it is my experience that when an Agency is established for any special purpose, independent interest ceases to a certain extent and what is distributed by the Agency is previously discounted as coming from interested quarters.

Thirdly, the Congress will not be able to exercise effective check over such Agencies, and there is great danger of authoritative distribution of wrong information and wrong ideas about the struggle.

Fourthly, it is not possible at the present moment to send out of India any person of importance for the sole purpose of disseminating news in foreign countries, for such men are too few for the internal work.

I am therefore of opinion that the work of publishing the *Congress Bulletin* should be better organized, if necessary, by engaging a special editor for the purpose and by sending the *Congress Bulletin* regularly to the chief news agencies of the world. The editor should be instructed to enter into correspondence with these newspapers or news agencies which may be found to interest themselves in Indian questions.

It is my firm opinion based upon experience gained through the conduct of the journals I have edited in South Africa and here that the more solid the Congress work and the sufferings of the Congress men and women, the greater the publicity the cause will attain without special effort. From the exchanges of letters and correspondence that I receive day by day from all parts of the world in connection with the conduct of *Young India,* I observe that never was so much interest taken in Indian affairs throughout the world as it is today. It follows that the interest will increase in the same proportion as the volume of our sufferings. The very best method of disseminating correct information about the political situation, therefore, is to make the Congress work purer, better organized and to evoke a greater spirit of suffering. Not only is curiosity thereby intensified, but people become more eager to understand the inwardness and the exact truth about the situation.

I remain,
Yours faithfully,
M. K. GANDHI

BARDOLI,
22nd Feb. 1922

After having gone through all the papers that were given to me and after having heard all the arguments for and against, I

remain convinced that, at least for the present, we want no news agency outside India. We want the whole world with us, but we shall not get it by carrying on a foreign agency. We can only send correct information to those who care for it. If a foreign country does not keep its own agency for gathering information from a particular country or about a particular movement, it is proof to me that that country is not interested in it. We have been without our agency in London now for nearly 15 months. I venture to think that we are no worse off today than we were 15 months ago. We are certainly better off because and to the extent that we have done substantial work in India itself. There are more people in the world interested today in India than there ever were. We, therefore, owe it to them that we place at their disposal correct information, but our duty must end there. I have before me a letter from Italy from an Italian editor telling me how deeply interested people in Italy are in the Indian movement, and the Italian newspapers are therefore busy instructing the Italian public in Indian affairs. This is what I call a natural and organic movement, but if, on the strength of this information, we were to establish an Indian agency in Italy to awaken further interest, we would not mend matters but would spoil them by overdoing. We shall therefore better consult our own interest by relying upon our own strength to speak for itself.

Moreover, the non-co-operation movement is one of self-help. Its formula is: "We shall succeed only to the extent of our strength and no further." No certificate of merit from the world will give us success, if we have not earned it by the sweat of the brow. No condemnation of the movement will kill it, unless we are ourselves so fickle-hearted as to give it up by reason of the condemnation. Let us not therefore turn our attention from our own work. Let us simply mind our work and let us be sure that the world will mind us without any further effort. I am really jealous of even taking away from their work some of the young men who necessarily have to be engaged in the preparation and distribution of the *Congress Bulletin*. But we have really no authentic record of the progress of our work from week to week. The *Congress Bulletin* will therefore be useful as well for workers in India as it undoubtedly will be for our friends in foreign countries.

Being almost impatient to see the work inaugurated, the Working Committee has given me a free hand in organizing the *Bulletin*. I hope to issue the first *Bulletin* next week and thenceforth it would be issued from week to week. The *Bulletin* will be sent to all the readers of *Young India* at a nominal charge to cover

a part or the whole of the cost of paper and printing. *Young India* has a registered circulation of over 25,000 and it goes to almost all parts of the world. It has a comprehensive exchange list. The price for the subscribers to the *Bulletin* only will be announced later. The method I have sketched is intended to save the Congress as much expense as possible and to give the widest publicity to the *Bulletin*. Whereas *Young India* represents my own views and those of my associates in the conduct of the journal, the *Bulletin* will contain nothing in the shape of individual views. It will be mainly a record of Congress activities all over India in all its multifarious departments, and an epitome of newspaper opinions both pro-Congress and anti-Congress. It will contain a Khilafat section registering all Khilafat activities during the preceding week. Such a *Bulletin* cannot become a success unless there is co-operation from all Congress and Khilafat workers. I invite therefore all who are interested in the *Bulletin* to send their suggestions and news addressed to the Editor, *Congress Bulletin*, C/o *Young India*. Correspondents will please take care to mark all such correspondence for the *Congress Bulletin* in order to save the *Young India* staff from having to handle correspondence intended for the *Bulletin*. To start with, I would ask every Provincial Congress Committee to send the number of members on its provincial register, the number of village and district organizations, the names and addresses of nationalist newspapers, the number of national educational institutions with the average attendance during the past 6 months, the number of Panchayats and all other information regarding non-co-operation activities.

Young India, 9-3-1922

21. GOVERNMENT DENIALS

I

Aligarh Incident

To the Editor, *Young India*

Dear Sir,

In the course of a communication addressed to the Government of India, you have stated as one of the seven instances of "lawless repression" the treatment of volunteers who "had given no offence or cause whatever" by the police in Aligarh. I have enquired into this on behalf of the Government from the Collector of Aligarh. He replies

that the charge is absolutely untrue and I beg that you will give publicity to what he writes :

"That knocks have been given and bruises endured is true enough but they have been inflicted solely in the course of dispersing unlawful assemblies and they have been extraordinarily few in number. No injured person has approached me, and even the non-co-operators of Aligarh are quite ready to do so if they have had any real grievance.

"The unruly spirit of a riotous crowd cannot be conjured away by the polite infinitive. As a matter of fact the kid gloves have never yet been taken off in Aligarh and the trouble here has been handled with the greatest moderation. Since the early attempt of the volunteers to behave in a disorderly and intimidating manner when a certain amount of force had to be used, I am not aware that there has been any kind of physical collision in the town. So far as good feeling can be said to exist anywhere, I should say that it exists here, and both the police and Europeans can now go freely about the city without interference. To describe Aligarh as suffering, or as having suffered, from repression is a travesty of language and of fact."

LUCKNOW,
16th February 1922

Yours faithfully,
J. E. GONDGE

This is no denial. It is an attempt to justify the use of force which is admitted. Every tyrant justifies the use he makes of his lawlessness. Naturally the non-co-operators did not report their bruises to the Collector. If the kid-gloves demonstration consisted of "knocks given and bruises endured", I am curious to know what it will be like when the kid gloves are off in Aligarh. If the arrest of Mr. Sherwani was great moderation and that of Mr. Khwaja was greater, then the "knocks and bruises" were, indeed, the greatest moderation.

II

IN BENARES JAIL

TO THE EDITOR, *Young India*

DEAR SIR,

In continuation of my d.o. letter No. 404/C, dated the 18th February 1922, I beg to draw your attention to a telegram from a certain Vishnudatiya of Benares to Mahatma Gandhi dated the 5th of Febuary, which was duly published in your paper on the 9th *idem*. Inquiry has been made into the statements made therein and I must apologize for the length of the report which I must ask you to publish in explanation and contradiction of the telegram aforesaid. The telegram was somewhat in-

coherent, but it has caused much concern in the mind of the public and its allegations can only be answered at considerable length. I therefore reproduce the report which has been sent to me by Major N. S. Harvey, the Superintendent of the Benares Central Prison:

The facts about this case are as follows. Eight youths were sentenced by the Joint Magistrate on the 21st January 1922, to rigorous imprisonment under section 143 I.P.C. and classed as 'non-politicals'. As there was such an unruly and unwieldy mob of political prisoners in the jail at the time, the jailor was not able to keep these eight prisoners separate, and they got mixed up with their friends, the other political prisoners, and we were not able to get hold of them and put them to hard labour.

On the 3rd February the Joint Magistrate and myself decided that we would separate these 'non-political' prisoners from the others, and after some trouble we were able to get hold of four of them—Ram Nath, Kamla Pati, Bhagwan Das and Satya Narayan, who were taken away to the regular juvenile prisoners' enclosure. This District Jail has had a juvenile jail in it for many years, so that the removal of these youths to this place was nothing out of the way. I have had 50 juveniles confined in this place for seven years to my knowledge. The juvenile barrack is a cellular one for obvious reasons, and youths are always locked up separately at night. So that the locking up of these four youths in separate cells was not a punishment, but was just the ordinary jail practice. They evidently did not like the idea of being separated from their political friends, so Bhagwan Das on the evening of the 4th February worked himself into a so-called state of 'unconsciousness'. This was about 7.30 p.m. I happened to be in the jail at the time and went at once and saw this youth. I most carefully examined him and came to the conclusion that there was nothing the matter with him and that he had worked himself into a 'hysterical state' purposely. Of course, his self-imposed hunger strike of two days' duration may have had something to do with his condition. He probably thought that, if he got into a state of feigned unconsciousness, he would be taken away to hospital and given nourishment. This actually happened, some milk was given him and he was quite well by the morning.

The hunger strike of the other political prisoners from the 3rd to the 5th had nothing to do with this business. This was started because they were not allowed to get sweets and food from outside, and also as a sort of advertisement.

On the night of the 2nd February, Kripalani[1] and his youths gave a lot of trouble in being locked up. They behaved like a lot of hooligans in

[1] Acharya J. B. Kripalani (b. 1888); principal of Gujarat Mahavidyalaya; President of the Indian National Congress, 1946 left Congress in 1951; Member of Parliament

their barracks and the jail people were not able to count or lock them up till 11.30 p.m. The next morning they went on 'hunger strike' and refused to speak to or answer any jail officials. It is all nonsense to say that the cells in which these youths were locked up are insanitary; they are undoubtedly the cleanest and most sanitary living rooms in the jail. To prove this, the special treatment prisoners, who have recently been transferred from the Central Jail, have elected to live in these cells. As for being waterless, this is absolutely untrue. These youths were kept together in the enclosure during the day where there is a perpetual tap of good municipal water and if they had required water at night, there was a regular warder and two convict overseers to give it to them.

On the 5th February (Sunday) the political prisoners refused to have an interview with their friends as they said they were on hunger strike. The mob of two or three hundred city people were told that their friends refused to see them and were asked to go away. They refused to do so and collected a few yards in front of the main gate and started yelling, shouting and singing, and as there was a possibility of the gate being rushed into, the jailor telephoned to me. I telephoned and asked the Superintendent of Police to remove this noisy and unruly mob from the jail precincts.

LUCKNOW,
20th February

Yours faithfully,
J. E. GONDGE

I have re-read the telegram referred to and appearing in *Young India*, of 9-2-22[1]. The most damaging facts seem to be admitted. The difference consists in the different gloss the Superintendent put upon the admitted facts. Without an impartial inquiry, who can judge between the rival interpretations? Those who know Prof. Kripalani will reject the charge of hooliganism brought against him and his pupils. As for insanitation and want of water, I am glad the Superintendent is able to deny the charge.

A REGRETTABLE MISREPRESENTATION

TO THE EDITOR, *Young India*

SIR,

The attention of the Central Provinces Government has been drawn to the editorial note on "Interference with religious liberty" which appeared in your paper of the 2nd February 1922. Enquiries have been made from the Superintendent, Saugor Jail, with the result that the information on which your comments are based proves to contain a series of glaring mis-statements. As these mis-statements are causing considerable

[1] *Vide* Vol. XXII, p. 367.

uneasiness in the public mind, I beg that you will give a prominent place to the following denial in an early issue:

1. Pundit Arjun Lal Shetti was admitted into the Saugor Jail on the 19th May 1921. He was put on twine making from the 13th June till he came to be admitted into the Jail Hospital for malaria (not for pneumonia) on the 24th September 1921. He remained in the Hospital for about a month and in consequence of the illness lost 11 lbs. in weight, of which he has regained 7 lbs. Ever since his discharge from the Hospital, he has been on third-class work in twine making. I am thus able to affirm that he was never made to grind or prepare cords during his illness. The allegation that "it was when he was thus pressed that he had tendered an apology which he withdrew immediately he came to his senses" is a wicked lie and has absolutely no foundation in fact. The truth is that, in view of the assurance given by the Government in the Provincial Legislative Council on the 2nd August 1921, to consider sympathetically any apology tendered by persons undergoing prosecution or imprisonment for seditious speeches or offences of similar nature, Superintendents of Jails were addressed to communicate the Government attitude to the political prisoners in their charge. This was accordingly communicated by the Superintendent, Saugor Jail, to Pundit Arjun Lal Shetti on or about the middle of September 1921. On the 2nd November 1921 he verbally expressed to the Superintendent his desire to apologize. A week after, he said the same thing to the Deputy Commissioner of the District when he paid a visit to the prisoner in Jail. The Deputy Commissioner asked him to apply in writing if he really wished to do so. The prisoner gave a written apology the next day, i.e., on the 10th November 1921, which was forwarded to the Local Government in the usual official manner. The fact of his having tendered an apology was well known and the interest taken by the public in this prisoner's health became very great. On the 21st November 1921 his son interviewed him and pressed him to withdraw his apology. The prisoner showed his willingness to do so in presence of his son and was told by the Superintendent to apply in writing, if he was really serious to withdraw it. The prisoner gave the petition to withdraw his apology two days after, i.e., on the 23rd November 1921, and [it] was forwarded by the Superintendent to the Local Government. I would pointedly draw your attention to the fact that the prisoner was discharged from the Hospital on the 17th October 1921 and he submitted his apology on the 10th November 1921, that is, nearly a month after the date of the discharge from the Hospital. It will thus appear that the prisoner was neither drugged nor tricked into making an apology. On the contrary it required the moral influence of his friends to make him withdraw it.

2. The allegation that "he is being forced to take eggs and wine" is a perversion of the truth. The fact is that neither of these articles is given to the prisoner. The prisoner petitioned the Superintendent to give him eggs and also wrote to his relatives about it, asking them to keep the matter secret and not to out-caste him. He even mentioned this to his friends Laxmi Narayan and Panna Lal of Saugor who interviewed him on the 16th January 1922. The Superintendent could not grant the prisoner's petition for eggs, as it is an article prohibited to good caste Hindus.

Yours faithfully,
N. R. CHANDORKAR
PUBLICITY OFFICER TO GOVERNMENT,
CENTRAL PROVINCES

This misrepresentation was discovered by me before the receipt of the letter from the Publicity Officer and duly noted in last week's *Young India*.[1] The misrepresentations about Pundit Sethi's treatment are about the worst I have yet noticed. I hope they are the last. I am sorry for being instrumental in giving currency to the sensational news about the treatment of Pundit Arjunlal.

Young India, 9-3-1922

22. *MESSAGE TO THE PUBLIC*[2]

[AJMER,
March 9, 1922]

(1) That there should be no demonstrations or hartal on his arrest.

(2) That mass civil disobedience should not be taken up and non-violence should strictly be adhered to.

(3) That full attention should be paid to the removal of untouchability and drunkenness and the use of khaddar should be encouraged.

(4) That, after his arrest, people should centre their hopes in Hakim Ajmal Khan.

The Searchlight, 19-3-1922

[1] This was published in the issue dated February 23, *vide* Vol. XXII, p. 453.

[2] Gandhiji saw Abdul Bari at Ajmer on March 9 and gave him this message to be released to the public. It was issued to the Press from Lucknow on March 15. Gandhiji was arrested on March 10.

23. *LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI*

AJMER,
Thursday [*March 9, 1922*]

CHI. MAHADEV[1],

I have come here for a day on Chhotani Mian's[2] invitation. I shall return tonight. Shuaib and Parasram are with me.

I got your letter. I do not know how Durga[3] came to think that I was offended. You did well in writing the letters. I would certainly be hurt if you do not express your thoughts. If you do not let me know them, I cannot correct them, nor can I, even if I wish to, correct my own thoughts in the light of what you think. Durga or Mathuradas or whoever else told you has made a mistake. Remember, however, that a prisoner[4] has no right to indulge in such speculation. In any case, he should not feel hurt. I wish to see you all as you actually are and not as you would be, for I, too, wish to appear to you all as I am. I may very much wish to be better than what I am; but if I did not appear as I am, I cannot be what I wish to be.

There was, therefore, no need for you to apologize.

After getting and considering all the papers, I have become confirmed in my views. By making a change in my language, I have proved my spirit of compromise. By expressing my personal views in *Young India*, I am proclaiming my firmness and independence. Take it from me that Chauri Chaura has saved us from a conflagration and has brought swaraj miles nearer. That other swaraj [we were trying to attain] was like a mirage. There is such a close connection between the means and the end that it is difficult to say which of the two is more important. Or we may say that the means is the body and the end is the soul. The end is invisible, the means is visible. Now we shall have the pleasure of demonstrating this great truth.

[1] Mahadev Desai (1892-1942); Gandhiji's secretary for 25 years

[2] Mian Mahomed Haji Jan Mahomed Chhotani; nationalist Muslim leader of Bombay. He had invited Gandhiji to attend the Muslim Ulemas' Conference.

[3] Wife of the addressee

[4] Mahadev Desai was then serving a term of imprisonment in Naini Jail, near Allahabad, for his articles in the *Independent*.

Just as Sudhanva[1] kept dancing with joy in the cauldron of boiling oil, so do I feel intense joy in the blazing fire around me. Now is the time when the real nature of non-violence will be revealed.

You should always write whatever you wish to without any hesitation. Keep on purifying the atmosphere around you. I wish you become a powerful writer in Urdu. Your presence outside is no doubt useful. I, however, wish that you finish your term of imprisonment.

You should not at all be worried about what is happening outside. Many people in America are unhappy. What can we do about them? Similarly, what can you do about what happens outside?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: S.N. 7981

24. *IN HAZARIBAG JAIL*

[On or before *March 10, 1922*][2]

TO THE EDITOR, *Young India*

SIR,

On 17-2-22, the Jail Superintendent, Major Cook and Mr. Meck, the Jailor of the local Central Jail, went to see Shah Abutorab Wazi Ahmed B.A.,B.L., Vakil of the High Court, who is a political (non-co-operator) prisoner and who has been transferred here from the Buxar Central Jail. At that time the said Maulvi Saheb who was engaged in reading his Quran was asked by the Superintendent to stand up; but as he was busy in reading his Quran he could not do so and hinted by raising his hand to wait, whereon the Jailor shouted out something in English and kicked the Quran and forcibly lifted up the aforesaid Maulvi Saheb and shook him physically and took away the Quran. This created a great deal of sensation and unrest among the other political prisoners in the jail who made some sort of protest. The public of this town has been greatly alarmed and shocked to hear all these incidents. So much so that, on Friday

[1] Son of King Hansdhwaj of Champavati in the *Mahabharata*, who defied his parents and, adhering to truth and God, smilingly threw himself into a cauldron of boiling oil

[2] This and the following item must have been sent to the Press by Gandhiji before his arrest on March 10.

last the Mussalmans of this place held a meeting in the mosque protesting against this sacrilegious act of the Jailor in kicking the Quran and brutally treating the Maulvi Saheb during his religious devotion.

On 18-2-22 Mr. A. W. Jones, Deputy Magistrate of Hazaribag, went to the jail hospital along with the Superintendent and the Jailor and there examined the aforesaid Maulvi Saheb, Babu Ram Narain Singh, B.L., a non-co-operator political prisoner, Babu Chitaranjan Guha Thakurta and Maulvi Md. Fasiuddin, prisoners, and they all corroborated the fact of kicking the Quran by the Jailor. After that, Doctor, Babu and Head-warder were examined and they denied all knowledge of the fact. After this the Superintendent ordered that the aforesaid Maulvi Saheb Abutorab B.L., Babu Chitaranjan Guha Thakurta and Md. Fasiuddin be given 15 stripes each and they were taken to the place for being flogged and the aforesaid Maulvi Saheb Abutorab B. L. was fastened to the triangular post whereon Mr. Wardi Jones, D. M., asked to wait as he had not examined the orderly. Then orderly warder, Ramsagar Ram, was examined who fully corroborated the fact that the Jailor kicked the Quran whereon the Deputy Magistrate stopped the flogging.

On 23-2-22 the Deputy Commissioner of Hazaribag went to the Central Jail and dismissed the aforesaid warder.

I am etc.,
RAMESHWAR PRASAD
SECRETARY,
DISTRICT CONGRESS COMMITTEE

HAZARIBAG,
27-2-22

If the statement made by the correspondent is correct, it betrays a lamentable lack of regard even for the most precious religious sentiments of the people.

Young India, 16-3-1922

25. *MY NOTES*

[On or before *March 10, 1922*]

DISAPPOINTMENT

There is keen disappointment in the air following the suspension of civil disobedience. There may be two explanations for this: one, that the people's hope of immediate swaraj has been shattered and, two, that people did not realize the paramount importance of preserving peace.

If the first explanation is correct, then the meaning of swaraj has not been understood at all. Swaraj is a state of mind to be experienced by us. We have to win it by our own strength. If this

is true, there is no reason at all for disappointment. Swaraj consists in our efforts to win it. If it is not won at the first attempt, we may make a second, a third, as many more as necessary. With every attempt, we shall advance. Has our labour of the last fifteen months been wasted?

He who does not know which direction to take may feel disappointed. If we know that swaraj can be won only by following the path of non-violence and we discover that, in place of the spirit of non-violence which we thought prevailed, people harboured violence, we should clearly see that our progress lies in suspending civil disobedience. If an army which has been advancing in the belief that the road ahead is clear comes upon a moat, does its progress lie in jumping into it? Does it not lie rather in abandoning the wrong path and seeking the right one or in stopping to build a bridge over the moat? What would history say of an army which, standing in despair beside the moat, fills it with its tears?

Non-co-operation Not Understood

Such disappointment only shows that one has not understood the meaning of non-co-operation. The foundation stone of swaraj was laid when non-co-operation was started. The slave who stops saluting his master, is he not freed from that very day? Let the master kick him, abuse him, hang him. The slave has stopped saluting. He has realized that he was a slave. What does he care if the master does not acknowledge him a free man? His strength increases with the latter's resistance, because it is a challenge to him.

So long as we are firm in our determination to secure justice about the Punjab, to heal the Khilafat wound, to win swaraj and also to stick to non-co-operation till we have succeeded in these aims, what reason do we have to feel disappointed?

When the War with Germany started, the British had expected that it would end in two months. Lord Curzon thought that he would have his Christmas dinner in Berlin. December 1914 passed and the War continued till December 1920; did this mean that the British were defeated? Liege was lost, so was Namur. France was run over by Germans right up to Paris. Did France admit defeat? So long as a warrior continues to fight, how can he be regarded as having been defeated? While the fight continues, strategy after strategy is planned, schemes of encirclement are tried out, tunnels are made through hills and bridges built over moats. It is thus that men and even nations are moulded. To

Arjuna's question, "Does not that soul perish which, though struggling, fails in its efforts?"[1] Shri Krishna replied, with the utmost affection: "No one who keeps striving ever meets with an unhappy end."[2] "It is only the soul which doubts that perishes."[3] If we do not have faith in our non-co-operation, we lose the struggle the very hour we embark on it.

Not Play-acting

The struggle on which we embarked in Calcutta in 1920 was no mere play-acting.[4] The decision was an expression of the nation's firm resolve. It was a pledge, like the one taken by the mill-hands in Ahmedabad.[5] Whether the struggle takes thirteen days or twenty-three, do those who stake their honour make any terms with God?

Time-limit of One Year Misunderstood

Some say: "Why should we send our children to national schools now? We had withdrawn them [from Government schools] in the hope that everything would be over in a year." If there are many people who think in this way, it is indeed good that our goal was not won in one year. Otherwise, what would have been the condition of such people and the country?

If we have been unable to win power in one year, by what logic have schools which earlier appeared sinful to us become now fit for our children to attend? Or, were the parents merely led away by my arguments when they withdrew their children from schools? If so, I ask their forgiveness and would certainly advise such parents to send their children to Government schools. I and those who have understood the meaning of non-co-operation will ever look upon these schools, even if guineas were to be distributed there, as fit to be boycotted so long as the Government does not repent and bow to public opinion, whether this takes one year or many many years.

Wrong Course

Some say that the Vidyapith should pay the expenses of schools. If the Vidyapith is to pay, where will it get the money from? Surely, it will not bring money from outside to educate

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, VI. 38

[2] ibid., VI. 40

[3] ibid., IV. 40

[4] At the special session of the Congress held in Calcutta in September 1920, the Non-co-operation resolution was passed.

[5] In February 1918; *vide* Vol. XIV.

children in Gujarat? Instead of contributing money to the Vidyapith and then getting it back from it, why should we not raise enough in each town or village to run good private schools?

Sahara Desert

I am convinced that it is all to the good that our way has been blocked by this Sahara Desert. We shall profit by the experience of being scorched by the heat and get hardened. We shall now be able to distinguish right from wrong, make out the brave from the coward, differentiate between those who joined us with proper understanding and those who did so without such understanding. We shall now know who are the actors and who the spectators. It was indeed necessary that we should learn this.

Schools are an acid test for us. Wherever national schools are functioning, it is proper that the local people should regard it as a point of honour to run them on their own. If no buildings are available, classes should be held under trees; if teachers cannot be paid, they may go round begging for provisions, live a life of privation and teach children. Only in this way can the nation rise.

Rowdyism Will Not Succeed

Defiance of law for its own sake is uncivil behaviour and rowdyism. If swaraj is won through rowdyism will the rowdies then run the Government? We are planning to win it with our own efforts and hope to run it ourselves. The worth of the swaraj-builder will not be tested by his ability to destroy, but by his ability to construct. One who can construct certainly knows how to destroy. But all those who can destroy cannot construct. We call the person who is engaged for breaking stones and gravel a mere wage-earner, while the one who builds is called a mason. Without having learnt how to construct, we wanted to start destroying in Bardoli[1] and so God, in His kindness, held us back and saved us from danger.

Swaraj-builders

We should heed the warning. We should now make an effort to become masons. If we cannot give a good account of ourselves in the building department, we have no right to offer civil disobedience.

[1] The Bardoli Taluka Conference held on January 29, 1922 accepted Gandhiji's proposal to launch civil disobedience and he informed the Viceroy about it in his letter of February 1. But the Chauri Chaura tragedy led Gandhiji to decide that the movement should be suspended.

Indifference about Preserving Peace

I have said that the second reason for disappointment may be that people failed to realize the importance of preserving peace. This is more dangerous than even the failure to understand the meaning of swaraj, for in that failure we are merely guilty of faulty diagnosis. If the *vaid*[1] is not sure of the correctness of his diagnosis, he can prescribe mild remedies. In the second instance, however, the *vaid* is guilty of carelessness in prescribing a remedy. A *vaid* gave a friend of mine zinc oxide in place of magnesium sulphate. Instead of having motions, the latter started vomiting and it was with the greatest effort, with proper treatment and after he had suffered much, that the patient was saved. Arsenic powder and powdered sugar look very much alike; what would be the condition of a person who takes arsenic instead of sugar? A friend mistook salt for sugar and put three teaspoonfuls in a cup of tea. When he took a sip, the expression on his face was worth reproducing in some comic journal.

The examples I have given are of ignorant, inexperienced *vaids*. But what shall we say about one who, though knowing the difference between arsenic and powdered sugar, does not care whether he gives the one or the other? We may understand the point of view of those who believe that swaraj cannot be won by peaceful means, but it is impossible to tolerate one who is so thoughtless as to incite violence when an experiment in a peaceful method is in progress. Anyone who is so thoughtless knows neither the meaning of swaraj nor the best means of securing it. To such a person, concern for means seems to be fetters on his freedom. My view is that, by suspending civil disobedience in Bardoli, we have saved ourselves from a great calamity. If we are certain that we shall not on the whole succeed in influencing people to adopt peaceful methods and that the professional trouble-makers, too, in the country will not yield to our persuasion, it would be wise to give up all talk of winning swaraj by peaceful means. If we cannot gain control over them by such means, we should conclude that we shall never be able to bring round this Government also by peaceful means. If they cannot be won over by our love, they will assuredly be over-awed by the Government's guns and help it, or they themselves will become the rulers. Both these situations are undesirable.

I believe that, though it may be difficult, it is not impossible to win over the lawless elements. We need to have faith in our-

[1] A physician practising Ayurveda

selves, as also patience. Our lives should be governed by dharma.

If we earnestly start working on the various items in the non-co-operation programme and make progress in them all, we shall automatically learn the lesson of peace, for they include three important constructive activities — khadi, removal of untouchability and the unity of all communities. Can anyone even dream that Hindus and Muslims can be truly united until they have fully realized the importance of peace? If the two can maintain peaceful relations so that they may help each other, they together can, with love, win over the unsocial elements and other mischief-makers. Those who believe that this cannot be done cannot possibly believe in true friendship between Hindus and Muslims. If these two major communities are not bound to each other by ties of mutual regard, I venture a prophecy and say that one day they will fight it out to their heart's content. If the pride of both is humbled after this, the two together will be able to overcome the third party; if, on the other hand, one of the two is defeated in fighting, it will be doomed to slavery. This way of looking at the matter will furnish us the key to an understanding of all our problems.

That Hindus and Muslims should find themselves together in such large numbers in India, that they should have been enslaved by a third power and that subsequently both should be awakened—the significance of these facts is plain for all to see. For myself, I see every moment the providence of God in it. Through peace lies victory, and through violence the destruction of both.

Propagation of Khadi

Shri Ramji Hansraj writes from Amreli to say that there was a time when hand-spun khadi was not available. Now that there is a large stock of khadi, he says, there are no people to wear it, and the saddest part of the story is that the women who spin, the carders who make the slivers and those who weave cloth from hand-spun yarn do not themselves wear khadi.

How can we hope to win swaraj under such circumstances? What is one to make of the fact that, even in a part of the country like Kathiawar, people do not wear khadi? Can anything be more perverse than that, instead of eating the bread I have made, I sell it in the market and then buy other bread for myself? Should I not value my own handiwork?

What are the workers of Kathiawar doing about this? Is not this one task enough to engage their energies—to produce khadi and see that people wear it? If they give up busying themselves with other activities, things will soon get right. If a population of

twenty-six lakhs spins, cards and weaves to the value of no more than Rs. 10 per head every year, even then its work would produce goods worth two crore and sixty lakh rupees. This would come to less than two pice per head daily. But drop by drop the lake is filled, as they say; in like manner, the result which can be brought about by an increase of two pice in everyone's earnings should be seen to be believed. A postcard costing a pice, a tax of two pies on a rupee-worth of salt, railway fares at the rate of three or four pies a mile—this is how Government's Postal Department makes a profit and the Post Master General gets an annual salary of thousands, the salt tax yields crores and the railway company earns lakhs from railway fares calculated at the rate of a few pies a mile.

The same kind of calculation applies to khadi. The only difference is that, while taxes at rates of a few pies make it possible for the Government to rule over us and the Viceroy to be paid a salary of Rs. 20,000 a month, while the earnings of railways yield large dividends to foreigners, the income from khadi will remain in the homes of the poor and brighten their lives. Practising this simple dharma even in a little measure can end much suffering.

I request everyone to help in clearing khadi stocks immediately wherever they have accumulated and in producing it wherever it is not being produced. I believe that all the khadi in Amreli will be disposed of if every person there buys from the store khadi just enough for one shirt.

Are there not enough uses for khadi? It can be used for making towels, loose covers, coverlets, double-sheets, satchels, bags, hammocks and carpets. When I hear of khadi stocks not being sold, I am reminded of persons who buy animal fat in place of ghee. In our country people may refuse to buy khadi when they refuse to buy ghee. We cannot claim to have understood the meaning of swaraj till khadi becomes as universal as currency.

Cotton Season

This is the cotton season. A reader, therefore, reminds us that everyone, especially the cultivator, should store enough cotton for his own use. Others may buy for their needs. We should count no less than four seers of cotton per head. The best way to store it is for each one of us either to spin the quantity into yarn or to get it spun by someone else. The rich can employ skilled women and have fine, well-twisted yarn spun according to their liking. In this way, we can revive the old custom of employing one's own spinner and weaver.

ARBITRATION BOARDS

In Gujarat, the practice of appointing arbitration boards has not yet been introduced. We have completely forgotten the advantages of having our disputes settled by a *panch* or an arbitrator, as if we thought that justice could only be got through unknown persons and by spending money. Justice is not to be bought for money in this way; what can be sold is injustice. Fraud or false witnesses will be of no avail before a *panch* or an arbitrator. A *panch* settles the dispute and so brings the two parties together. Courts increase enmity, *panchas* lessen it. It is true that in these days people are tempted to go to courts because of absence of honest *panchas*. Moreover, are those who are fond of litigation likely to go to a *panch* at all? Nevertheless, if in every town or village, people make an effort, the practice of settling disputes through *panchas* or arbitrators can be revived.

POLLUTION OF SAFFRON

Till this day I was not aware that the saffron which is used for ritual worship and making sweets is imported from abroad and that it is smeared with animal fat. Shri Mulchand Uttamchand Parekh writes:[1]

In view of these painful facts, the use of saffron in ritual worship or for making sweetmeats is courting sin while seeking to do good.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 12-3-1922

26. *LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI*

SABARMATI,
[On or before *March 10, 1922*]

CHI. DEVDAS,

You are making separation from you more and more unbearable to me every day. I feel it, however much I wish that I did not. However, at a time like this, separation is the proper thing. I have already given you whatever advice I wanted to. The best thing for you now is to go to jail in an innocent manner, that is, without thinking of your safety, you may plunge yourself in any danger that comes your way. And if riots break out anywhere, I

[1] The letter, not given here, stated that saffron was mainly imported from Spain and was smeared with blood and fat.

wish you will have the courage to sacrifice your life without a moment's thought in order to extinguish them. My blessings are with you.

Ramdas[1] has not yet come. Today Prabhudas[2] has arrived unexpectedly in response to Vinoba's[3] letter. Chhaganlal[4] too has come.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: S.N. 7848

27. *TELEGRAM TO CONGRESS OFFICE, BOMBAY*

AHMEDABAD,
March 10, 1922

WEATHER PERMITTING[5] GOING BARDOLI SUNDAY.

GANDHI

Seven Months with Mahatma Gandhi, p. 259

28. *TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ*

AHMEDABAD,
March 10, 1922

THICK RUMOUR ARREST. YOU RAMDAS SHOULD COME IF NOT REQUIRED THERE.

GANDHI

Seven Months with Mahatma Gandhi, p. 258

29. *LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI*

Friday [March 10, 1922][6]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

Have just arrived from Ajmer. I am likely to be arrested this very day. Jagannath has now become free. I am thinking

[1] Gandhiji's third son
[2] Son of Chhaganlal Gandhi
[3] Vinoba Bhave, Bhoodan leader; *vide* Vol. XIV, pp. 188-9.
[4] Chhaganlal Gandhi, Gandhiji's nephew and co-worker; Editor of the Gujarati section of *Indian Opinion* after 1908
[5] Gandhiji was probably referring to the 'political weather'.
[6] On this date Gandhiji arrived at Ahmedabad from Ajmer.

of sending him to Jalgaon. Dastane has come here for the same purpose. The work there can be carried on if we send one man. Please send me a wire if you see no difficulty in this [arrangement]. I shall reach there on Sunday morning if I am free. I have a letter from Surendra, but I am not writing to him separately.

SHRI MAGANLAL GANDHI
SWARAJ ASHRAM
BARDOLI *via* SURAT

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 5988. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

30. LETTER TO PAUL RICHARD[1]

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 10, 1922

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.

If I am free I expect to be in Surat on my way to Bardoli on Sunday morning. Do please come to Bardoli that day. I would like to have a long chat with you.

I am publishing your statement[2].

Yours sincerely,

M. PAUL RICHARD
BHARATIYA BUNGALOW
ATHVA LINES
SURAT

From a photostat: S.N. 7982; also G.N. 869

[1] This letter also, like the preceding one, did not bear Gandhiji's signature and was dictated by him to Krishnadas before his arrest on the night of March 10. It was forwarded to the addressee on March 12.

[2] This was published in *Young India*, 16-3-1922, under the title "His Sorrow Is My Sorrow". It was a rejoinder to an article by Gandhiji on Paul Richard's interview with Lokamanya Tilak, published in *Young India*, 23-2-1922.

31. LETTER TO N. C. KELKAR

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 10, 1922

DEAR MR. KELKAR,

I have your letter.

As you know, the rumours are thick about my arrest, but if I am free, I shall certainly come over to Bombay as soon as you are ready. If I get my well-deserved rest, I know that you will do all you can to further the movement. I have really very little to say in addition to what I have said in my article "If I am arrested" in *Young India*. I was in Ajmer yesterday, and I have given some advice about the Khilafat which I may note down, otherwise you will hear it from Mr. Chhotani and others.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. N. C. KELKAR
POONA

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 7984

32. LETTER TO GOPALA MENON

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 10, 1922

MY DEAR GOPALA MENON,

I certainly do remember your conviction.

I wish your venture all success. The only message[1] that I can send in the midst of overwhelming work is for both Hindus and Moplahs to realize their future responsibility not to brood over the past. How to reach the Moplahs as also the class of Hindus whom you would want to reach through your newspaper is more than I can say, but I know that Hindus should cease to be cowardly. The Moplahs should cease to be cruel. In other words, each party should become truly religious. According to the

[1] This was a message to Menon's newly started Calicut paper *Naveena Keralam*, and was published in the Press.

Shastras, Hinduism is certainly not the creed of cowards. Equally certainly, Islam is not the creed of the cruel. The only way the terrible problem before you can be solved is by a few picked Hindus and Mussalmans working away in perfect unison and with faith in their mission. They ought not to be baffled by absence of results in the initial stages, and if you can get together from among your readers a number of such men and women, your paper will have served a noble purpose.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. N. GOPALA MENON
EDITOR, "NAVEENA KERALAM"
6, VELLALA STREET, VEPERY
MADRAS

Seven Months with Mahatma Gandhi, p. 260

33. LETTER TO DR. BHAGWANDAS

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 10, 1922

DEAR BABU BHAGWANDAS[1],

I was delighted to receive your letter from Vizagapatnam.

I was sorry to hear about your brother.

It is said that my arrest is imminent. It is at night that I am dictating this letter, but if I am not arrested, I promise you I propose to deal with your pamphlet[2]. Not a week has passed but I have thought of it, only you will see that, in spite of my having doubled the size of *Young India*, I have not put in a line that need not have gone in that particular issue. So many things are happening which require immediate attention that I have been obliged to defer consideration of your scheme. That does not mean an indefinite postponement. You have generously given me a fairly long time, but I shall not abuse your generosity. If I get my well-deserved rest, I would like you then to open the discus-

[1] 1869-1959; author, theosophist and colleague of Annie Besant; Principal of the Kashi Vidyapith, Banaras

[2] This was on the definition and content of swaraj, a subject on which Dr. Bhagwandas appears to have been frequently in correspondence with Gandhiji. He took up the matter again after the latter's release in 1924; *vide* Vol. XXIV, "Note on Bhagwandas's Letter", 8-5-1924, and the appendix thereto.

sion yourself in the columns of *Young India* if it is allowed to survive my arrest.

Yours sincerely,

BABU BHAGWANDAS
SEVASHRAM
SIGRA
[BANARAS]

From a microfilm: S.N. 7986

34. *LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR*[1]

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 10, 1922

DEAR MR. JAYAKAR[2],

I do wish you [will soon][3] get well and strong.

I thank you for your long letter[4], but I won't weary you with my counter-argument. As you know, my arrest is reported to be imminent, but if I am not arrested, I shall look forward to our meeting. Just one thing I would like to say in order to correct what seems to me to be a misapprehension. I should be sorry if anything I have written has led you to infer that I have in any shape or form altered my view about the efficacy of imprisonment for our salvation.

I have not lost faith in the responsiveness to sacrifice by those who compose the Government. Only those who have courted imprisonment have not all been of the right sort. I certainly expect no response whatsoever to the imprisonment of those who are full of violence in their hearts, and my reason for suspending

[1] Though dictated on the night of March 10, this letter was typed and dispatched the next day with the following covering note by Krishnadas, Gandhiji's personal secretary: "The accompanying letter was dictated to me by Mahatma Gandhi last night about an hour and a half prior to his arrest. The letter was actually typed by me early this morning and is being posted to you without Mahatmaji's signature but in accordance with his instructions."

[2] 1873-1959; lawyer and Liberal leader from Maharashtra

[3] These two words occur in the version given in M. R. Jayakar's *The Story of My Life*, I, pp. 585-6.

[4] ibid., pp. 583-5. Dated March 7, this was in reply to Gandhiji's letter of March 2; *vide* Vol. XXII. It dealt with, in some detail, the Congress programme of non-co-operation and the question of Council-entry. Jayakar had wanted to meet Gandhiji.

even civil disobedience for the time being is to see if it is at all possible to produce an atmosphere of real non-violence. Thus my present view is not due to my discovery of greater hardness in the administrators, but to the painful discovery of much less non-violence now in our midst than I had expected.[1]

Yours sincerely,

SJT. M. R. JAYAKAR
399, THAKURDWAR
BOMBAY

Seven Months with Mahatma Gandhi, p. 259

35. MESSAGE TO ASHRAM PEOPLE

AHMEDABAD,
March 10, 1922

His parting words to the Ashram people were that all who bore patriotism and love for India should strain every nerve to propagate peace and goodwill all over India, among all communities.

The Hindu, 13-3-1922

36. AN EXHORTATION[2]

AHMEDABAD,
March 10, 1922

I have also[3] full hope in you and wish you to pursue in the work as energetically and courageously as I am hitherto doing.

The Hindu, 17-3-1922

[1] Jayakar replied to this on March 17; indisposition prevented him from seeing Gandhiji, as he had expected, the next day, the day of the trial; *vide The Story of My Life*, Vol. I, pp. 586-7.

[2] Gandhiji addressed these words, just before being escorted to the Sabarmati Jail, to "an eye witness" to the arrest whose report was published in *The Hindu*.

[3] Earlier, Gandhiji had expressed full trust in Hasrat Mohani.

37. *TRIAL AND STATEMENT IN COURT*

[AHMEDABAD,
March 11, 1922]

At Saturday noon Messrs Gandhi and Banker[1] were placed before Mr. Brown, Assistant Magistrate, the Court being held in the Divisional Commissioner's Office at Shahibag. The prosecution was conducted by Rao Bahadur Girdharilal, Public Prosecutor.

The Superintendent of Police, Ahmedabad, first witness, produced the Bombay Government's authority to lodge a complaint for four articles published in *Young India* dated 15th June 1921 entitled "Disaffection a Virtue", dated 29th September, "Tampering with Loyalty", dated 15th December, "The Puzzle and its Solution" and dated 23rd February 1922, "Shaking the Manes".[2] He stated that the warrant was issued on the 6th instant by the District Magistrate, Ahmedabad, and the case was transferred to the file of Mr. Brown. Meanwhile warrants were also issued to the Superintendents of Police of Surat and Ajmer as Mr. Gandhi was expected to be at those places. The original signed articles and issues of the paper in which these appeared were also produced as evidence.

Mr. Gharda, Registrar, Appellate side, Bombay High Court, second witness, produced correspondence between Mr. Gandhi, the Editor of *Young India* and Mr. Kennedy, District Judge, Ahmedabad. Mr. Chatfield, Magistrate of Ahmedabad, was the next witness. He testified to the security deposited by Mr. Gandhi and the declaration of Mr. S. Banker as printer of *Young India*.

Two formal police witnesses were then produced.

Accused declined to cross-examine the witnesses.

Mr. M. K. Gandhi, 53, farmer and weaver by profession, residing at Satyagraha Ashram, Sabarmati, said:

I only want to state that, when the proper time comes, I shall plead "guilty" so far as disaffection towards Government is concerned. It is true that I am the Editor of *Young India*, that the articles read in my presence were written by me and that the proprietors and publishers permitted me to control the whole of policy of the paper. That is all.[3]

[1] Shankerlal Banker, printer and publisher of *Young India*. He was arrested and convicted along with Gandhiji.

[2] For the text of the first article, *vide* Vol. XX, pp. 220-1; for those of the second and the third, Vol. XXI, and for that of the fourth, Vol. XXII.

[3] This paragraph is extracted from the "Statement of the Accused" as recorded in the Court and reproduced in *Trial of Gandhiji*, pp. 136-7. *The Hindu* report had verbal variations.

Mr. Shankerlal Banker, landed proprietor, Bombay, second accused, stated that at the proper time he would plead guilty to the charge of having published the articles complained of.

Charges were framed on three counts under Section 124-A; accused were committed to the Sessions and trial comes off on the 18th instant.

Mr. Gandhi asked his associates present in the Court to carry on the publication of his papers.

The Hindu, 13-3-1922

38. *INTERVIEW TO INDULAL YAGNIK*[1]

SABARMATI JAIL,
March 11, 1922

A big job has been accomplished in Ajmer.[2] Maulana Abdul Bari[3] made a scathing speech which deeply agitated the thousands of Muslims who had gathered there. He had bragged a little. Many believe when I went there that there would be fireworks between us two and Hindu-Muslim unity would be wrecked. But the Maulana is an extremely pure man. I said to him : "Whatever you do today will be done in anger only. That may, perhaps, incense a few other Muslims also, but that will not benefit us at all. I, too, wish that both of us should go to the gallows, but only while we remain utterly pure." The Maulana understood my point fully and now I do not worry on his account at all. Maulana Hasrat Mohani[4] also was there and he has come here with me. He has promised me that he would not place obstacles in the straightforward work of the Congress by upholding violence even in the least. Therefore, I am free from anxiety.[5]

I have only one message to give and that concerns khadi. Place khadi in my hands and I shall place swaraj in yours. The uplift of the *Antyajas* is also covered by khadi and even Hindu-Muslim unity will live through it. It is also a great instrument of

[1] Political leader of Gujarat; associate of Gandhiji for a number of years; editor of *Navajivan* during the period of Gandhiji's imprisonment, 1922-24; was elected to Lok Sabha in 1957.

[2] Gandhiji attended the Muslim Ulemas' Conference at Ajmer on March 9, 1922.

[3] 1838-1926; nationalist Muslim divine of Lucknow who took active part in the Khilafat movement and urged the Muslims to refrain from cow-slaughter

[4] 1875-1951; nationalist Muslim leader who was active in the Khilafat movement

[5] What follows is the message asked for by Yagnik.

peace. This does not mean that I do not favour boycott of Councils and law-courts, but in order that people may not have a grievance against those who go to them, I desire that the people should carry on work concerning khadi even with the help of lawyers and members of legislatures. Keep the Moderates highly pleased, cultivate love and friendship for them. Once they become fearless, that very moment they will become one with us. The same holds good also for Englishmen.

He[1] will now do great things. He has asked me to observe what he would do when I am in jail.[2]

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 19-3-1922

39. MESSAGE TO BOMBAY[3]

SABARMATI JAIL,
March 11, 1922

I do not want Bombay to mourn over the arrest of one of its mute Secretaries and myself, but to rejoice over our rest. Whilst I would like an automatic response to all the items of non-co-operation, I would like Bombay to concentrate upon the charkha and khaddar. The moneyed men of Bombay can buy all the hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar that could be manufactured throughout India. The women of Bombay, if they really mean to do their share of work, should religiously spin for a certain time every day for the sake of the country. I wish that no one will think of following us to jail. It would be criminal to court imprisonment till a complete non-violent atmosphere is attained. One test of such atmosphere will be for us to put the Englishmen and Moderates at ease. This can be done only if we have goodwill towards them in spite of our differences.

M. K. GANDHI

The Hindu, 14-3-1922; also from a photostat: S.N. 8059

[1] Referring to Madan Mohan Malaviya

[2] When Yagnik remarked, while taking leave of Gandhiji, that the latter had found in the jail a good nursing home, Gandhiji burst out into a great laugh and said, "Of course, of course, that is so."

[3] The message was sent through Sarojini Naidu who met Gandhiji in Sabarmati Jail.

40. *LETTER TO HAKIM AJMAL KHAN*

SABARMATI JAIL,
March 12, 1922

MY DEAR HAKIMJI,

Since my arrest, this is the first letter I have commenced to write after having ascertained that under the jail rules I am entitled to write as many letters as I like as an under-trial prisoner. Of course, you know that Mr. Shankerlal Banker is with me. I am happy that he is with me. Everyone knows how near he has come to me—naturally, therefore, both of us are glad that we have been arrested together.

I write this to you in your capacity as Chairman of the Working Committee and, therefore, leader of both Hindus and Mussalmans or, better still, of all India.

I write to you also as one of the foremost leaders of Mussalmans, but, above all, I write this to you as an esteemed friend. I have had the privilege of knowing you since 1915. Our daily growing association has enabled me to prize your friendship as a treasure. A staunch Mussalman, you have shown in your own life what Hindu-Muslim unity means.

We all now realize as we have never before realized that without that unity, we cannot attain our freedom and I make bold to say that, without that unity, the Mussalmans of India cannot render the Khilafat all the aid they wish. Divided, we must ever remain slaves. This unity, therefore, cannot be a mere policy to be discarded when it does not suit us. We can discard it only when we are tired of swaraj. Hindu-Muslim unity must be our creed to last for all time and under all circumstances. Nor must that unity be a menace to the minorities, the Parsis, the Christians, the Jews or the powerful Sikhs. If we seek to crush any of them, we shall some day want to fight each other.

I have been drawn so close to you chiefly because I know that you believe in Hindu-Muslim unity in the full sense of the term.

This unity, in my opinion, is unattainable without our adopting non-violence as a firm policy. I call it a policy because it is limited to the preservation of that unity. But it follows that thirty crores of Hindus and Mussalmans united not for a time but for all time can defy all the powers of the world and should consider it a cowardly act to resort to violence in their dealings

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966—1,00,000—10-20—(PP)—a.

M. H. 6.

No. 6

Case No. of the Criminal Register for 19 .

STATEMENT OF THE ACCUSED.

I state as follows:—

My name is Mohandas

My father's name is Karamchand Gandhi

My age is about 53 years;

I am by caste Hindu Banya

My occupation is farmer and weaver

I am an inhabitant of the Ashram Sabarmati

Q. The evidence has been given in your hearing. Do you wish to make any remarks about it.

A. I only want to state that when the pro.er time comes I shall plead "guilty" so far as disaffection towards Government is concerned. It is true that I am the editor of Young India that the articles read in my presence were written by me and that the proprietors and publishers permitted me to control the whole of the policy of the paper. That is all

18/3/22

[signature]

Addl. D. M.

M. K. Gandhi

Sunday
12-3-22

My dear Krishnadas

The correspondence, reports etc. should come to you for disposal.

Unless it is too much for you the papers all articles must finally pass through your hands.

I have seen several names as editor [illegible] Babu, Rajaji, Balachandra, Yes Swami, Kaka, etc.

I think it better now if Satis Babu gave you the permission to [illegible] & help.

The room should be entirely at your disposal. You should lock the verandah door from inside. Fix up the whole office there. Hardikar & the bulletin staff should be there for work but under your permission.

Of course you have my blessings. God will give you give you all the strength & wisdom you need.

Bapu

with the English administrators. We have hitherto feared them and their guns in our simplicity. The moment we realize our combined strength, we shall consider it unmanly to fear them and, therefore, ever to think of striking them. Hence, am I anxious and impatient to persuade my countrymen to feel non-violent not out of our weakness but out of our strength. But you and I know that we have not yet evolved the non-violence of the strong and we have not done so because the Hindu-Muslim union has not gone much beyond the stage of policy. There is still too much mutual distrust and consequent fear. I am not disappointed. The progress we have made in that direction is indeed phenomenal. We seem to have covered in eighteen months' time the work of a generation. But infinitely more is necessary. Neither the classes nor the masses feel instinctively that our union is necessary as the breath of our nostrils.

For this consummation, we must, it seems to me, rely more upon quality than quantity. Given a sufficient number of Hindus and Mussalmans with almost a fanatical faith in everlasting friendship between the Hindus and the Mussalmans of India, we shall not be long before the unity permeates the masses. A few of us must first clearly understand that we can make no headway without accepting non-violence in thought, word and deed for the full realization of our political ambition. I would, therefore, beseech you and the members of the Working Committee and the A.I.C.C. to see that our ranks contain no workers who do not fully realize the essential truth I have endeavoured to place before you. A living faith cannot be manufactured by the rule of majority.

To me the visible symbol of all-India unity and, therefore, of the acceptance of non-violence as an indispensable means for the realization of our political ambition is undoubtedly the charkha, i.e., khaddar. Only those who believe in *cultivating* a non-violent spirit and eternal friendship between Hindus and Mussalmans will daily and religiously spin. Universal hand-spinning and the universal manufacture and use of hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar will be a substantial, if not absolute, proof of the real unity and non-violence, and it will be a recognition of a living kinship with the dumb masses. Nothing can possibly unify and revivify India as the acceptance by all India of the spinning-wheel as a daily sacrament and the khaddar wear as a privilege and a duty.

Whilst, therefore, I am anxious that more title-holders should give up their titles; lawyers, law-courts; scholars, the Government schools or colleges; the Councillors, the Councils and the soldiers and the civilians, their posts, I would urge the nation to restrict its

activity in this direction only to the consolidation of the results already achieved and to trust its strength to command further abstentions from association with a system we are seeking to mend or end.

Moreover, the workers are too few. I would not waste a single worker today on destructive work when we have such an enormous amount of constructive work. But perhaps the most conclusive argument against devoting further time to destructive propaganda is the fact that the spirit of intolerance, which is a form of violence, has never been so rampant as now. Co-operators are estranged from us. They fear us. They say that we are establishing a worse bureaucracy than the existing one. We must remove every cause for such anxiety. We must go out of our way to win them to our side. We must make Englishmen safe from all harm from our side. I should not have to labour the point if it was clear to everyone, as it is to you and to me, that our pledge of non-violence implies utter humility and goodwill even towards our bitterest opponent. This necessary spirit will be automatically realized if only India will devote her sole attention to the work of construction suggested by me.

I flatter myself with the belief that my imprisonment is quite enough for a long time to come. I believe in all humility that I have no ill will against anyone. Some of my friends would not have to be as non-violent as I am. But we contemplated the imprisonment of the most innocent. If I may be allowed that claim, it is clear that I should not be followed to prison by anybody at all. We do want to paralyse the Government considered as a system—not however by intimidation, but by the irresistible pressure of our innocence. In my opinion, it would be intimidation to fill the gaols anyhow, and why should more innocent men seek imprisonment till one considered to be the most innocent has been found inadequate for the purpose?

My caution against further courting of imprisonment does not mean that we are now to shirk imprisonment. If the Government will take away every non-violent non-co-operator, I should welcome it. Only, it should not be because of our civil disobedience, defensive or aggressive. Nor, I hope, will the country fret over those who are in jail. It will do them and the country good to serve the full term of their imprisonment. They can be fitly discharged before their time only by an act of the Swaraj Parliament. And I entertain an absolute conviction that universal adoption of khaddar is swaraj.

I have refrained from mentioning untouchability. I am sure every good Hindu believes that it has got to go. Its removal is as necessary as the realization of Hindu-Muslim unity.

I have placed before you a programme which is, in my opinion, the quickest and the best. No impatient Khilafatist can devise a better. May God give you health and wisdom to guide the country to her destined goal.[1]

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7991

41. LETTER TO KRISHNADAS

[SABARMATI JAIL,]
Sunday, March 12, 1922

MY DEAR KRISTODAS[2],

The correspondence, reports, etc., should come to you for disposal.

Unless it is too much for you, all articles must finally pass through your hands.

I have several names as Editor (Satis Babu[3], Rajagopalachari[4], you, Shuaib[5], Kaka[6], Devdas[7].

It would be better now if Satis Babu gave you the permission to sign articles.

The room should be entirely at your disposal. You should lock the verandah door from inside. Fix up the whole office there. Hardikar[8] and the *Bulletin* staff should be there for work but under your permission.

Of course you have my blessings. God will give you all the strength and widsom you need.

BAPU

Seven Months with Mahatma Gandhi, p. 260

[1] To this Hakim Ajmal Khan replied or March 17; *vide* Appendix I.

[2] As Gandhiji used to call Krishnadas, his secretary

[3] Satishchandra Mukerji, formerly Principal, Bengal National College, and editor, Dawn Magazine, Calcutta.

[4] Chakravarti Rajagopalachari (b. 1879); lawyer, journalist, author and statesman; Governor-General of India, 1948-50

[5] Shuaib Qureshi, editor of *New Era*

[6] Dattatreya Balkrishna Kalelkar (b. 1885); popularly known as Kaka Saheb; a colleague of Gandhiji since 1915

[7] Devdas Gandhi, Gandhiji's youngest son

[8] Dr. N. S. Hardikar, Congress leader from Karnatak, head of the Hindustani Seva Dal

42. *LETTER TO ABDUL BARI*

SABARMATI JAIL,
[After *March 12, 1922*]

DEAR MAULANA SAHIB,

Just now I am enjoying myself in my house of freedom. Hakimji and other friends are here. I feel your absence, but that does not much worry me since we had ample discussion at Ajmer. I know that you will certainly steadily stick to those principles that formed the subject of our talk. I will earnestly request you to avoid making any speeches in public. Personally, after deep thought, I have come to the conclusion that, if there is anything that can serve an effective and visible symbol of the Hindu-Muslim unity, it is the adoption of charkha and pure khaddar dress prepared from hand-spun yarn by the rank and file of both the communities. Only universal acceptance of this cult can supply us with a common idea and afford a common basis of action.

The use of khaddar cannot become universal until both the communities take to it. The universal adoption of charkha and khaddar, therefore, would awaken India. It will also be a proof of our capacity to satisfy all our needs. Ever since the commencement of our present struggle, we have been feeling the necessity of boycotting foreign cloth. I venture to suggest that, when khaddar comes universally in use, the boycott of foreign cloth will automatically follow. Speaking for myself, charkha and khaddar have a special religious significance to me because they are a symbol of kinship between the members of both the communities and the hunger- and disease-stricken poor. It is by virtue of the fact that our movement can today be described as moral and economic as well as political. So long as we cannot achieve this little thing, I feel certain success is impossible. Again, the khaddar movement can succeed only when we recognize non-violence as an essential condition for the attainment of swaraj and Khilafat both. Therefore, the khaddar programme is the only effective and successful programme that I can place before the country at present. I was so glad when you told me that you would begin to spin regularly when I be arrested. I can only say that every man, woman and child ought to spin as a religious duty till a complete and permanent boycott of foreign cloth is effected, the Khilafat and Punjab wrongs satisfactorily redressed and swaraj attained. May I entreat

you to use all your influence for popularizing charkha among your Muslim brethren?

Speeches and Writings of M. K. Gandhi, pp. 745-6

43. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

SABARMATI JAIL,
March 13 [1922]

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

At last I am having a quiet time. It was bound to come. The calm that prevails in India today is surely a mighty triumph of non-violence.

I would like you to keep *Young India* up to the mark. At first I thought of wiring to you to take editorial charge. But I recalled our conversation and thought the nominal head should be an Indian. But will you regularly write and, when time permits, go over to Sabarmati occasionally? You must know Kristodas and Shuaib. You will fall in love with both at once.

I hope the case you have lost did not contain much that could not be recalled.

With love,

Yours,
MOHAN

C. F. ANDREWS
SANTINIKETAN
BOLPUR

From a photostat: G.N. 2610

44. LETTER TO URMILA DEVI[1]

SABARMATI JAIL,
March 13, 1922

MY DEAR SISTER,

You have neglected me entirely. But I know that you have done so to save my time.

I want you to devote the whole of your time to nothing but charkha and khaddar. It is the only visible symbol of peace, all-

[1] Sister of C. R. Das

India unity and our oneness with the masses including the so-called untouchables.

Please show this to Basanti Devi[1] and Deshbandhu. I hope he is well and strong. Prisoners cannot afford to be ill.

You know, of course, that Shankerlal Banker is with me.

With love to you all.

SRIMATI URMILA DEVI
NARI KARMA MANDIR
CALCUTTA

Speeches and Writings of M. K. Gandhi, p. 742

45. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

[SABARMATI JAIL,]
Silence Day, March 13, 1922

You have now to take on the burden of Shankerlal's work. You are capable of carrying it. But on one condition : you must take exercise and spend two days in a week at Matheran. You ought not to remain ill or weak.

I enjoy boundless peace. Here it is as good as home. Till this moment I have not felt that I am in jail. But, believe me, I shall enjoy even greater peace than at present when visitors stop coming and there are some jail restrictions also. There should, therefore, be no grief on my account.

Those who are outside [the prison] will find that their peace lies in their work. And that work is nothing but popularizing and producing khadi. The production in Bombay proper may not be much, but it is desirable that plenty of it is collected there from all sides.

If we have our headquarters in Ahmedabad instead of in Bombay and collected all the khadi there, it may possibly be less expensive.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, pp. 47-8

[1] Wife of C. R. Das

46. *LETTER TO REVASHANKER JHAVERI*[1]

JAIL,
Silence Day, March 13, 1922

I enjoy perfect peace. I was arrested only after I had eradicated my anger, had undergone atonement and purified myself. What better lot can there be for India or for me? Please do not worry about me at all . . . .[2]

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 48

47. *INTERVIEW IN JAIL*[3]

SABARMATI JAIL,
March 14, 1922

A long discussion took place regarding the contribution of funds by some Ahmedabad mills towards the Tilak Swaraj Fund of about three lacs of rupees. Mr. Gandhi insisted on the giving over the whole amount to the Gujarat Provincial Committee, in a manner so as to use any sum wholly or partly in the national education. . . . At the end of a long argumentative discussion, ultimately the parties came to a unanimous decision that the Fund Committee should pay every year such amount as may be voted by the Provincial Committee to the labour unions of Ahmedabad in the interest of labour schools. The Unions were to submit their accounts to the Fund Committee of the mill-owners and keep drawing amounts from them.

This matter being settled, Mr. Gordhandas Patel, who is the Honorary Joint Secretary of the Mill Owners' Association, asked Gandhiji:

In case you are convicted, will the non-co-operation movement be adversely affected?

A. The words "in case" are inappropriate. The more harsh the punishment, the more strong will the non-co-operation movement be. This is my firm conviction.

[1] Revashanker Jagjivan Jhaveri, a friend of Gandhiji and brother of Dr. Pranjivan Mehta

[2] Omission in the source

[3] Gandhiji was interviewed by leading public men of Ahmedabad along with Gordhandas I. Patel, member of the Ahmedabad Mills Tilak Swaraj Fund who, in his private capacity, put a few questions to Gandhiji. This extract was released by the Associated Press.

Q. After your conviction, if Government resort to rigorous repressive measures, can any district or tahsil embark upon mass civil disobedience?

A. Certainly not. It is my emphatic advice that, whatever repressive measures Government may adopt, the people should in no circumstances indulge in any movement of mass civil disobedience.

Q. What should be the next move of the nation now?

A. The first and foremost duty of the nation is to keep perfect non-violence. Mutual ill will and feelings of hatred among the different sections of people have taken such a strong root that constant effort to eradicate them is absolutely essential and the non-co-operators should take the lead, because their number is considerable. There is a considerable lack of toleration, courtesy and forbearance amongst non-co-operators and it is my firm belief that that is the sole reason why our victory is delayed, and I regard the charkha as the most potent weapon to secure the required peace, courtesy, etc. Hence I would only advise that the people should become immediately occupied with the charkha and khaddar prepared therefrom. No sooner could we effect a complete boycott of foreign cloth and the use of hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar than swaraj is in hand and in consequence whereof, the doors of the jail would be automatically laid open and my companions and myself would be able to be out. I anxiously await such an auspicious occasion.

Q. What is your opinion in regard to the remarks made by Sir William Vincent[1] against the Ali Brothers?

A. There is nothing new in it. The Brothers have given out in the clearest terms what they believed to be true. This is considered to be their greatest fault and I too am committing similar faults. For the same reason I regard them both as my real brothers.

Q. Will India suffer any harm in consequence of Mr. Montagu's resignation?

A. I certainly do not believe that there will be any harm. But Mr. Montagu certainly deserves credit for what he has done.

Q. Is there any logical connection between the political conditions of England and India at present?

A. There certainly is such a connection. If the programme which I have laid down for India is carried through, it will produce

[1] Member, Viceroy's Executive Council

a very salutary effect not only on the political situation of England but on that of the whole world.

Q. What do you think of the coming Paris Conference?

A. At present, I have no high expectations from that, as it is my firm belief that, as long as India does not show completely the miracle of the charkha, the problem of Khilafat will not be properly solved.

Q. What are your instructions regarding the harmonious relations between the mill-hands and the capitalists of the place, in your absence?

A. Repose full confidence in Anasuyabehn[1].

Q. What message do you send to the people of Ahmedabad?

A. The people of Ahmedabad should take to khaddar, preserve perfect unity and support the current movement.

The Bombay Chronicle, 18-3-1922

48. *LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ*

[SABARMATI JAIL,]
Thursday Night [*March 16, 1922*][2]

CHI. JAMNALAL[3],

As I proceed in my quest for Truth, it grows upon me that Truth comprehends everything. I often feel that ahimsa is in Truth, not *vice versa*. What is perceived by a pure heart at a particular moment is Truth to it for that moment. By clinging to it, one can attain pure Truth. And I do not imagine that this will lead us into any moral dilemma. But often enough, it is difficult to decide what is ahimsa. Even the use of disinfectants is *himsa*. Still we have to live a life of ahimsa in the midst of a world full of *himsa*, and we can do so only if we cling to Truth. That is why I can derive ahimsa from truth. Out of Truth emerge love and tenderness. A votary of Truth, one who would scrupulously cling to Truth, must be utterly humble. His humility should increase with his observance of Truth. I see the truth of this every moment of my life. I have now a more vivid sense of Truth and of my own littleness than I had a year ago.

1 Anasuyabehn Sarabhai, a social worker and labour leader of Ahmedabad

2 The letter bears the signature of the jail officer indicating that it was seen and passed by him on March 17, 1922. It was written by Gandhiji the previous night while he was an under-trial prisoner.

3 1889-1942; merchant and banker of Wardha; close associate of Gandhiji; social worker and philanthropist; treasurer of the Congress for a number of years.

The wonderful implication of the great truth *Brahma satyam jaganmithya*[1] grows on me from day to day. We should therefore be always patient. This will purge us of harshness and make us more tolerant. Our lapses will then appear as mountains and those of others as small as mole-hills. The body exists because of our ego. The utter extinction of the body is *moksha*. He who has achieved such extinction of the ego becomes the very image of Truth; he may well be called the *Brahman*. Hence it is that a loving name of God is *Dasanudasa*[2].

Wife, children, friends, possessions—all should be held subject to that Truth. We can be satyagrahis only if we are ready to sacrifice each one of these in our search for Truth. It is with a view to making the observance of this Truth comparatively easy that I have thrown myself into this movement and do not hesitate to sacrifice men like you in it. Its outward form is Indian swaraj. Its real [inner] form is the swaraj of particular individuals. This swaraj is being delayed because we have not found even one satyagrahi of that pure type. This, however, need not dismay us. It should spur us on to greater effort.

You have, indeed, made yourself my fifth son. But I am striving to be a worthy father to you. It is no ordinary responsibility which a man who adopts a son undertakes. May God help me, and may I be worthy of the responsibility in this very life.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: G.N. 2843

49. *LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS*[3]

SABARMATI JAIL,
March 17, 1922

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have just got your letter. You were quite right in not leaving your work. You should certainly go to Gurudev[4], and be with him

[1] "Brahma is real, this world is unreal."

[2] Servant of servants

[3] This was in reply to C. F. Andrews's letter expressing deep regret that, on account of the railway strike, he was not able to leave his work and come to Gandhiji before the trial was over.

[4] Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941); poet and author; was awarded Nobel Prize for literature in 1913; founder of Visva Bharti, now a university, at Santiniketan

as long [as] he needs you. I would certainly like your going to the Ashram (Sabarmati) and staying there a while, when you are free. But I would not expect you to see me in jail; I am as happy as a bird! My ideal of a jail life, especially that of a civil resister, is to be cut off entirely from all connection with the outside world. To be allowed a visitor is a privilege. The religious value of jail discipline is enhanced by renouncing privileges. The forthcoming imprisonment will be to me more a religious than a political advantage. If it is a sacrifice, I want it to be the purest.

With love,

Yours,
MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 1307

50. LETTER TO A YOUNG FRIEND[1]

SABARMATI JAIL,
March 17, 1922

MY DEAR CHILD,

Well, I hope you were all happy over the news of my arrest. It has given me great joy, because it came just when I had purified myself by the Bardoli penance and was merely concentrating upon no experiment but the proud work of khaddar manufacture, i.e., hand-spinning. I would like you to see the truth of the spinning-wheel. It and it alone is the visible outward expression of the inner feeling for humanity. If we feel for the starving masses of India, we must introduce the spinning-wheel into their homes. We must, therefore, become experts and, in order to make them realize the necessity of it, we must spin daily as a sacrament. If you have understood the secret of the spinning-wheel, if you realize that it is a symbol of love of mankind, you will engage in no other outward activity. If many people do not follow you, you have more leisure for spinning, carding or weaving.

With love to you all,

BAPU

Speeches and Writings of M. K. Gandhi, p. 747

[1] The source does not carry the name of the addressee. It is, however, likely that it was written to Esther Menon whom Gandhiji used to address as "My dear child".

51. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SABARMATI JAIL,
Silence Day [*March 17, 1922*][1]

CHI. MAHADEV,

Maybe this will be my last letter to you for a long time to come. Rest assured that you are rendering service by being there. My real service begins here. I shall exert myself to the utmost to observe the jail rules with my whole being, to shake off likes and dislikes, and if I really become purer every day in jail, that will have its effect outside also. Today there is no limit to my peace of mind, but when I am sentenced and visits from people stop, I shall have still greater peace of mind.

It may be asked, if we can render greater service in this manner, why not go and live in a jungle. The answer is simple. To go and live in a jungle suggests *moha*[2], for it implies desire on our part. To a Kshatriya whatever comes unsought is dharma. The peace of jail life which one gets without seeking may do one good. How wonderful is God! I purified myself thoroughly in Bardoli, did not allow any impurity to enter into me in Delhi, but on the contrary, purified myself still further by putting before the people the same thing in a language which would appeal to them, for I showed thereby my tenderness together with my firmness. Even afterwards, through *Young India* and *Navajivan*, I carried on self-purification. I wrote an article on ahimsa and another entitled "Death Dance"[3]. Thus when the process of self-purification had reached the highest point, I offered myself for arrest, singing the song of *Vaishnavajana*[4]. If this does not constitute the good, what else can?

It is my desire that no one should now deliberately seek imprisonment.

Translate this letter to your teacher Khwaja Saheb[5], to your comrade Joseph[6] and others.

[1] The date is given in the addressee's hand.

[2] Attachment to false values

[3] *Vide* pp. 54-6.

[4] A devotional song attributed to Narasinh Mehta, a poet-saint of Gujarat. *Vide* Vol. XIX, p. 72.

[5] Khwaja Abdul Majid who taught the addressee Urdu in the Naini Jail

[6] George Joseph, a barrister of Madura, was on the staff of the *Independent*,

Could it be even dreamt of that Shankerlal should be arrested with me? But God may do anything.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: S.N. 7997

52. *LETTER TO MANILAL GANDHI*

SABARMATI JAIL,
March 17, 1922

CHI. MANILAL[1],

Tomorrow I shall be sentenced. I shall hardly wish to write letters thereafter.

I shall be content if you take care of your health, and occupy yourself in some good work anywhere. While I am in jail, it is not necessary that you must come here. Now that you have made *I.O.*[2] your own, I think you can come here only after you have placed it on a sound footing. I see no one whom I can send to you from here. Every good worker is needed here.

It seems you have not yet sent the account from there. If you have not, please do so.

Imam Sahib's wife, Haji Sahiba, died suddenly of heart failure on reaching the port of Porbandar. Imam Saheb is filled with grief. He had been to see me yesterday.

Now about your personal problem. Both Naidu and Ramdas tell me that I should write to you about your marriage. They believe that deep down in your heart there is the desire to marry, but that you would marry only if I absolve you from your promise. I do not consider you to be under any promise to me. It would be proper for every man to be under binding to himself. One is one's own enemy or friend.

You have bound yourself and you alone can free yourself from it.

It is my opinion that whatever peace you get is because of your self-imposed binding. You can be sure about this. As long as you do not think of marriage, you stand absolved from your past sins. This atonement of yours keeps you pure. You can stand up as a man before the world. The day you marry you will lose

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and in jail with Mahadev Desai as a result of Government's action against that paper. He also edited *Young India* for some time.

[1] Gandhiji's second son, who was in South Africa

[2] *Indian Opinion*, Gandhiji's weekly

your lustre. Take it from me that there is no happiness in marriage. To the extent Ba is my friend, I derive happiness from her, no doubt. But I derive the same happiness from all of you and from the many men and women who love and serve me. I derive more [happiness] from the man or woman who understands me. If, at this moment, I get enamoured of Ba and indulge in sexual gratification, I would fall the very instant. My work would go to the dogs and I would lose in a twinkling all that power which would enable one to achieve swaraj. My relation with Ba today is that of brother and sister, and the fame I have is due to it.

Please do not think that I got this wisdom after I had my fill of pleasure. I am simply painting before you the world as I find it from experience. I cannot imagine a thing as ugly as the intercourse of man and woman. That it leads to the birth of children is due to God's inscrutable way. But I do not at all believe that procreation is a duty or that the world will come to grief without it. Suppose for a moment that all procreation stops, it will only mean that all destruction will cease. *Moksha* is nothing but release from the cycle of births and deaths. This alone is believed to be the highest bliss, and rightly.

I see every day that all our physical enjoyments, without exception, are unclean. We take this very uncleanliness to be happiness. Such is the mysterious way of God. However, our *purushartha*[1] lies in getting out of this delusion.

Having said all this, I regard you as quite free [to act as you please]. I have written this merely as a friend. I have not given any command as a father. "Be you good", this is my only injunction. However, do what you wish, but not what I wish. If you simply cannot do without marrying, do think of marriage by all means.

Please write to me in detail what your innermost thoughts are.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Please send here all my manuscript papers, correspondence files, books of newspaper-clippings, etc., which are lying there. Also, all the books which you think are not needed there.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 1116. Courtesy: Sushilabehn Gandhi

[1] Goal of human life

53. LETTER TO KISHORELAL MASHRUWALA

SABARMATI JAIL,
Friday [*March 17, 1922*][1]

BHAI SHREE KISHORELAL,

I have always longed to see you. It would have been enough to have met you. Well, now your letter will do. You did the right thing in giving up the idea of coming over to see me. Your coming would not have served any special purpose; besides, the interruption in your practice[2] on account of it would have been an obvious loss.

Since your effort is sincere, it will certainly bear fruit. No honest endeavour ever goes in vain.

Sentence has not yet been passed on me. Possibly it will be known only tomorrow. At present I am an under-trial prisoner, and perfectly at peace. Shankerlal Banker, too, is with me.

My blessings are ever with you. Do not be in a hurry to leave the place. But you may certainly leave it when your inner voice tells you to do so.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Shreyarthini Sadhana, pp. 139-40

54. LETTER TO B. F. BHARUCHA

[SABARMATI JAIL,
Before *March 18, 1922*][3]

How can I forget to write to you? Please tell my Parsi sisters and brothers never to lose faith in this movement. It is impossible for me to give up my confidence in them. There is no other programme before me than that of khadi and charkha, charkha and

[1] Gandhiji was sentenced on Saturday, March 18, 1922. This letter was written the previous day.

[2] The addressee had retired to a hut for contemplation under the guidance of Kedarnath *alias* Nathji.

[3] This letter appears to have been written before Gandhiji's trial on March 18.

khadi. Hand-spun yarn must be as current among us as are small coins. To attain this object we can put on no other cloth than hand-spun and hand-woven khadi. So long as India is not able to do this much, civil disobedience will be futile, swaraj cannot be attained, and Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs are impossible to be righted. If this conviction is driven home to you, keep on turning out yarn and using khaddar. Be expert spinners.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

Young India, 30-3-1922

55. INTERVIEW TO "MANCHESTER GUARDIAN"

SABARMATI JAIL,
[Before *March 18, 1922*][1]

. . . We came to the subject of non-co-operation. I asked him if—in view of the answer Christ gave in the incident of the tribute money—he did not think the policy of non-co-operation was contrary to Christ's teaching. He replied:

Not being a Christian, I am not bound to justify my action by Christian principles. But, as a matter of fact, in this case I do not think there is any indication that Christ was against the principle of non-co-operation. I think His words show that He was for it.

"I do not understand," I protested. "Surely the meaning is quite clear. 'Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's' means that it is our duty to pay to the civil authorities what is their due. If it doesn't mean that, what does it mean?"

Christ never answered a question in a simple and literal manner. He always gave in His replies more than was expected, something deeper—some general principle. It was so in this case. Here He does not mean at all whether you must or must not pay taxes. He means something far more than this. When He says "Give back to Caesar the things which are Caesar's", He is stating a law. It means[2] 'give back to Caesar what is his, i.e., I will have nothing to do with it.' In this incident Christ enunciated the

[1] The interview must have taken place before Gandhiji was tried and sentenced on March 18; *vide* "The Great Trial", 18-3-1922.

[2] Here Gandhiji waved his hand as though putting something away from him.

great law—which He exemplified all His life—of refusing to co-operate with evil. When Satan said to Him, "Bow and worship me"—i.e., co-operate with me,—then He said, "Get thee behind me, Satan." When the crowds round Him wanted to take Him by force and make Him a military king, He refused to co-operate with them as their method was evil; they wanted Him to rely on force. Christ's attitude against the authorities was defiant. When Pilate asked Him if He were king, He answered, "Thou sayest it." Is not that treating authority with defiance? He called Herod "that fox". Was that like co-operation with authorities? And before Herod He would not answer a word. In short, He refused to co-operate with him; and so I refuse to co-operate with the British Government.

"But," I said, "Surely it is our duty in this imperfect world to co-operate with what is good in individuals and institutions." The Mahatma said:

As a man, I would gladly co-operate and be friends with Lord Reading; but I could not co-operate with him as the Viceroy, being a part of a corrupt Government.

Protesting further, I said: "Granted the Government has made mistakes, yet you cannot surely say it is wholly bad; if there is miscarriage of justice here and there, the broad fact remains that the 300 millions of India are kept in a condition of law and order. Are you against governments in general? Can you point out to me any government on earth that is faultless and would satisfy you?" He replied at once:

Yes, look at the Government of Denmark. I should be satisfied with such a Government. It represents the people; it does not exploit a conquered nation; it is efficient; the people under it are cultured, intellectual, manly, contented and happy; it supports no large army and navy to keep others in imperial subjection.

"But," I asked, "do you think empires are inherently bad? Surely the Roman Empire was a benefit to civilization. Christ never said a word against it as far as we know."

Quite so, but it was not His business to inveigh against imperialism. Every great reformer has to struggle against the special evil of his age. Jesus, Mohammed, Buddha and, in a lesser way, Luther had their own evils and difficulties to contend with, peculiar to their age. So have we. Now it is imperialism that is the great Satan of our times.

"So you are out to destroy the Empire?" I asked.

I would not put it that way. I only wish to destroy the Empire

by creating a commonwealth. I do not wish for complete separation from England; we have no right to wish for it.

"What is your definition of this commonwealth to which India shall belong, what is to be its structure?"

It is to be a fellowship of free nations joined together by the "silver cords of love". (I think it is Lord Salisbury's phrase.) Such a fellowship already exists for many parts of the Empire. Look at South Africa, what fine fellows they are there! Australia—fine fellows! And New Zealand—splendid land and a fine people! I would have India enter freely into such a fellowship and with the same rights of equality for Indians as for other members of the commonwealth.

"But surely that is just the very aim that the Government has for India: to become a self-governing unit in the Empire as soon as she is ready for the responsibility. Is not this the whole meaning of the Montagu reforms?"

The Mahatma shook his head.

Ah, I am afraid I do not believe in those reforms. When they were first introduced, I rejoiced and said to myself, "Here at last is a small ray of light in the darkness, just a small chink—but I will go forward to meet it." I welcomed it; I fought against my own people to give it a fair chance. I said this was a sign of true repentance on the part of the Government. When the War broke out, I went about speaking at recruiting meetings because I thought the Government did really mean to give us what it promised. It is only a small beginning, I thought, but I will wait and see. I will humble myself, make myself small to go through this narrow opening. But events have changed me. Then came the Punjab atrocities, then the Khilafat question, and finally, all the repressive actions of the Government, and now I can believe in the reforms no longer. They were a mere blind, a camouflage to prolong the agony. That is why I call the Government Satanic and why I refuse to co-operate with it in any way.

From the subject of non-co-operation, the conversation passed naturally enough to the question of the boycott of foreign goods and the great khadi (homespun) campaign. Here the Mahatma's face lit up, his eyes shone with enthusiasm.

Of all my plans and foibles, of all my weaknesses and fanaticisms, or whatever you like to call them, khadi is my pet one.

Touching the rough homespun shawl over his shoulder, he said:

This is sacred cloth. Think what it means. Imagine the

thousands and hundreds of thousands of homes in the famine areas. When the famine comes they are stricken down; they are helpless. They do nothing in their homes—can do nothing—they wait and die. If I can introduce the spinning-wheel into these homes, their lives are assured; they can earn enough money with the sale of their homespun to tide them over the famine.

This coarse stuff is dearer and finer to me than the softest silks of Japan. Through it I am bound nearer to millions of my humble and starving countrymen. Look at the cloth you are wearing. When you buy that, you put one or two annas into the hands of the workman and six or seven into the pocket of the capitalist. Now look at mine. All the money I spend on this goes straight into the hands of the poor—to the weaver, the spinner, and the carder, and not a pice into the hands of the rich man. To know this fills me with a heavenly joy. If I can act thus, if I can introduce the spinning-wheel into every cottage in India, then I shall be satisfied for this life; I could go on with my other schemes in my next if it pleased God.

"What do you mean?" I asked, not quite sure of the drift of his last remarks. "You think we come back again to this earth?" He replied:

Yes. I think we all come back here again if we are not pure enough to go to heaven. You see, it is the same principle we were talking about before. "Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's"—the body must give back to the earth the things that are of the earth before the soul can give itself absolutely to God; or, rather, the soul must refuse to co-operate with the things of this earth; it must become quite free from any earthly desires and entanglements.

"And do you believe animals have souls too?"

Of course. It is the same with them; they, too, must learn to give back to Caesar the things which are Caesar's. That is why as Hindus we do not kill animals; we leave them free to work out their own destinies.

"Then you think it is wrong to kill even such things as snakes, scorpions, and centipedes?"

Yes, we never kill them at our Ashram. It is a high stage in the development of the soul to feel a love for all humanity, but it is a higher stage still to have a heart of love for every living thing. I confess that I have not reached this stage. I still feel afraid when I actually see these creatures come near me. If we have no fear at all, I do not think they will harm us.

(I might mention here an incident related to me by one of Gandhiji's followers. At evening prayer one day at his Ashram, a cobra came through the dusk and crawled right on to Mr. Gandhi, raising its head in front of him. His followers were going to catch it, but he signed to them to be still. He remained motionless himself and the reptile slid over his knees and went back into the garden.) The Mahatma, still on the subject of our relation to the animal world, continued:

I met an Englishman once. He was a veterinary surgeon and had a wonderful way with animals. We were visiting a house together, and suddenly a gigantic brute of a dog rushed towards us, fierce as a lion, and raised himself up almost to the height of a man as he flung himself at us. I was petrified with fear, but this Englishman went forward to meet it as it charged, and embraced it without a trace of fear. Its anger evaporated at once and it began wagging its tail. It impressed me very much. That is the true way of meeting animals by non-resistance.

"But do you not think a man's life is worth more than an animal's? Take yourself now. You are the leader of a great movement which you believe to be for the good of your country. Supposing you were confronted by a crocodile and you could only escape by injuring it, would you not think your duty and responsibility as a leader were more important than the life of that reptile?"

No, I should say—or at least I ought to say—to this crocodile, "Your need is greater than mine", and let it devour me. You see, our life does not finish with the death of the body. God knows all about it. We none of us know what will happen next. If I escaped the crocodile, I could not escape the flash of lightning that might come next minute.

"But surely," I urged, "a man's soul is different from that of a crocodile—if it has one at all. You remember what Chesterton says about it, 'when a man is taking his sixth whiskey and soda, and is beginning to lose control over himself, you come up to him and give him a friendly tap on the shoulder and say, 'Be a man.' But when the crocodile is finishing his sixth missionary, you do not step up to it and tap it on the back and say, 'Be a crocodile.' Doesn't this show a man has an ideal in him to strive after in a way no animal has?"

The Mahatma laughed and said:

True, there is a difference between the souls of men and of animals. Animals live in a sort of perpetual trance; but man can wake up and become conscious of God. God says, as it were, to man, "Look up and worship Me; you are made in My image."

"And the souls of animals, where do they come from?" I queried. "Do you think the soul of a man can become the soul of an animal?"

Yes, I think all these horrible and evil creatures are inhabited by the souls of men who have gone wrong—snakish men, greedy, unmerciful crocodile men, and so on.

"But look at the infinite number of animals, the countless millions upon millions of insects, to mention only one group of the animal kingdom; are they all souls—the mosquitos, the sandflies, the microbes?"

Who are we, to set a limit to God's sphere of action? Are there not countless other suns and planets in this universe?

It was time for me to go, for I had another appointment, so at this point I rose to take my leave. I went to the edge of the little carpet on the verandah where we had been sitting and began to put on my shoes (for I had removed them, eastern fashion, being in a manner his guest).

As I lifted one shoe, I saw a spider in it. "See," I said to him, laughing, as I shook out the loathsome thing, and, resisting the impulse to crush it, let it run away. "Look; it has been sent to me, as a temptation, to try if I have profited by your sermon."

He laughed—he has an infectious and hearty laugh—and said:

Yes, a spider may be a great matter. Don't you remember the story of Mohammed and the spider?

I confessed my ignorance, wondering vaguely if he had got the story muddled up with Robert Bruce.

Yes, one day Mohammed was fleeing from his enemies in great danger. In desperation he turned into a sort of cave in the rock. A few hours afterwards the pursuers came along. "Ah," said one, "let's look in here; this is a likely place." "No," replied the other, "he couldn't be in here, for, see, there is a spider's web across the entrance." Not realizing how recently it had been spun, they passed on, and so Mohammed escaped by the help of the spider and the will of Allah.[1]

The Hindu, 15-8-1922

[1] The following are the concluding remarks of the reporter:

While he had been telling this, his friend and fellow-prisoner, Mr. Banker, had brought him his charkha or spinning-wheel. As I bade good-bye to the Mahatma, he was just settling down to the daily duty, shared by all his followers (in theory if not in practice), of spinning or weaving a certain amount each day.

As I reached the end of the verandah, I turned for a last look. There was this unassuming-looking little man, dressed with less ceremony than the meanest coolie, squatting cross-legged in front of his charkha, spinning away as contentedly as Mohammed's spider. Was he, I wondered, spinning a web that was to save the Indian peasant from the menace of an industrial system,

56. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

SABARMATI JAIL,
March 18, 1922

DEAR JAMNALAL,

From the purely economic point of view, I can say that unless merchants dealing in foreign yarn and foreign cloth give up their trade and unless the public give up their fondness for foreign cloth, starvation—the chief malady of our country—will not be ended. I hope all businessmen will participate fully in the propagation of khaddar and the spinning-wheel.

Yours,
MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi original: G.N. 2198; also 2844

57. THE GREAT TRIAL[1]

AHMEDABAD,
March 18, 1922

At the Circuit House at Shahi Bag, the trial of Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Banker commenced on Saturday noon.

Sir J. T. Strangman[2] with Rao Bahadur Girdharlal conducted the prosecution while the accused were undefended. The Judge[3] took his seat at

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untinged with even a veneer of Christian ethics; or was he himself caught in the centre of a vast web of illusions, spun from his own extraordinary brain, into which he had drawn hundreds and thousands of his ignorant and emotional countrymen?

[1] A verbatim report consisting of a shorthand transcript of the entire Sessions Court proceedings is available in *Trial of Gandhiji*, pp. 197-212. This report from *Young India* has minor verbal modifications or additions made in it wherever necessary to bring it in line with the Court records.

A contemporary report of the trial was published by the Sadaqat Ashram Press, Patna, in 1922, with an 'introduction' by Mazharul Haque, and reprinted in 1965 by Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad. Also relevant is the book *Two Memorable Trials of Mahatma Gandhi*, edited by R. K. Prabhu, published by Navajivan in 1962. Sarojini Naidu has given a classic description of the memorable trial; *vide Mahatma*, Vol. II, "The Great Trial".

[2] Advocate-General, and Special Public Prosecutor

[3] Justice R. S. Broomfield

12 noon and said there was a slight mistake in the charges framed, which he corrected. The charges were then read out by the Registrar, the offence being in three articles published in the *Young India* of September 29, December 15, of 1921 and February 23, 1922. The offending articles were then read out; first of them was, "Tampering with Loyalty"; the second, "The Puzzle and Its Solution" and the last was "Shaking the Manes".

The Judge said the law required that the charge should not only be read out, but explained. In this case, it would not be necessary for him to say much by way of explanation. The charge in each case was that of bringing or attempting to bring into hatred or contempt or exciting or attempting to excite disaffection towards His Majesty's Government established by law in British India. Both the accused were charged with the three offences under Section 124 A, contained in the articles read out, written by Mr. Gandhi and printed by Mr. Banker. The words "hatred and contempt" were words the meaning of which was sufficiently obvious. The word "disaffection" was defined under the Section, where they were told that disaffection included disloyalty and feelings of enmity and the word used in the Section had also been interpreted by the High Court of Bombay in a reported case as meaning political alienation or discontent, a spirit of disloyalty to Government or existing authority.[1] The charges having been read out, the Judge called upon the accused to plead to the charges. He asked Mr. Gandhi whether he pleaded guilty or claimed to be tried.

MR. GANDHI: I plead guilty on each count of the charge. I merely observe that the King's name is omitted from the charge-sheet and, in my opinion, very properly.

THE JUDGE: Mr. Banker, do you plead guilty, or do you claim to be tried?

MR. BANKER: I plead guilty.

Sir J. Strangman then wanted the Judge to proceed with the trial fully;[2] but the Judge said he did not agree with what had been said by the Counsel. The Judge said that from the time he knew he was going to try the case, he had thought over the question of sentence and he was prepared to hear anything that the Counsel might have to say, or Mr. Gandhi wished to say, on the sentence. He honestly did not believe that the mere recording of evidence

[1] The interpretation of the judge was: "An attempt to excite disaffection towards Government is equivalent to excite political hatred of Government as established by Law, to excite political discontent and alienate the people from their allegiance."

[2] He urged that "the charges should be investigated as fully as possible and also that the Court will be in a better position to pass sentence if it has the whole of the facts."

in the trial which Counsel had called for would make any difference to them, one way or the other. He, therefore, proposed to accept the pleas.[1]

Mr. Gandhi smiled at this decision.

The Judge said nothing further remained but to pass sentence and before doing so, he liked to hear Sir J. T. Strangman. He was entitled to base his general remarks on the charges against the accused and on their pleas.

SIR J. T. STRANGMAN: It will be difficult to do so. I ask the Court that the whole matter may be properly considered. If I stated what has happened before the Committing Magistrate, then I can show that there are many things which are material to the question of the sentence.

The first point, he said, he wanted to make out, was that the matter which formed the subject of the present charges formed a part of the campaign to spread disaffection openly and systematically to render Government impossible and to overthrow it. The earliest article that was put in from *Young India* was dated 25th May 1921, which said that it was the duty of a non-co-operator to create disaffection towards the Government.[2] The counsel then read out portions of articles written by Mr. Gandhi in the *Young India*.

Court said nevertheless it seemed to it that the Court could accept plea on the materials of which the sentence had to be based.

Sir J. Strangman said the question of sentence was entirely for the Court to decide. The Court was always entitled to deal in a more general manner in regard to the question of the sentence than the particular matter resulting in the conviction. He asked leave to refer to articles before the Court and what result might have been produced if the trial had proceeded in order to ascertain what the facts were. He was not going into any matter which involved dispute.

The Judge said there was not the least objection. Sir J. Strangman said he wanted to show that these articles were not isolated. They formed part of an organized campaign, but so far as *Young India* was concerned, they would show that from the year 1921. The Counsel then read out extracts from the paper, dated June 8, on the duty of a non-co-operator,[3] which was to preach disaffection towards the existing government and preparing the country for civil disobedience. Then in the same number there was an article on disobedience.[4]

[1] For a fuller version of the judge's observations, *vide Trial of Gandhiji*, p. 167.

[2] Commenting that the Government's charge on Sunderlal, student leader of Central Provinces, was not for violence but purely spreading disaffection, Gandhiji had written in *Young India* that "it may be stated to be the creed of the non-co-operator to give voice to the popular disaffection towards the Government and to spread it. Disaffection is the very essence of non-co-operation." *Vide* Vol. XX, pp. 138-40.

[3] ibid., pp. 178-87.

[4] This was published in *Young India*, 15-6-1921; ibid., pp. 228-30.

Then in the same number there was an article on Disaffection—a virtue or something to that effect.[1] Then there was an article on the 28th of July 1921,[2] in which it was stated that "we have to destroy the system". Again, on September 30,[3] 1921, there was an article headed, "Punjab Prosecutions" where it was stated that a non-co-operator worth his name should preach disaffection. That was all so far as *Young India* was concerned. They were earlier in date than the article, "Tampering with Loyalty" and it was referred to the Governor of Bombay. Continuing, he said, the accused was a man of high educational qualifications and evidently, from his writings, a recognized leader. The harm that was likely to be caused was considerable. They were the writings of an educated man, and not the writings of an obscure man and the Court must consider to what the results of a campaign of the nature disclosed in the writings must inevitably lead. They had examples before them in the last few months. He referred to the occurrences in Bombay last November and Chauri Chaura, leading to murder and destruction of property, involving many people in misery and misfortune. It was true that, in the course of those articles, they would find non-violence was insisted upon as an item of the campaign and as an item of the creed. But what was the use of preaching non-violence when he preached disaffection towards Government or openly instigated others to overthrow it? The answer to that question appeared to him to come from Chauri Chaura, Madras and Bombay. These were circumstances which he asked the Court to take into account in sentencing the accused and it would be for the Court to consider those circumstances which involve sentences of severity.

As regards the second accused, his offence was lesser. He did the publication and he did not write. His offence nevertheless was a serious one. His instructions were that he was a man of means and he asked the Court to impose a substantial fine in addition to such term of imprisonment as might be inflicted upon. He quoted Section 10 of the Press Act as bearing on the question of fine. When making a fresh declaration, he said a deposit of Rs. 1,000 to Rs. 10,000 was asked in many cases.

COURT: Mr. Gandhi, do you wish to make a statement to the Court on question of sentence?

MR. GANDHI: I would like, with the Court's permission, to read a written statement.

COURT: Could you give me the writing to put it on record?

MR. GANDHI: I shall give it as soon as I finish reading it.

[1] *Vide* Vol. XX, pp. 220-1.
[2] ibid., p. 431.
[3] This appears to be a slip for September 1; *vide* Vol. XXI, p. 35.

Before reading his written statement, Mr. Gandhi spoke a few words as introductory remarks to the whole statement. He said:

Before I read this statement I would like to state that I entirely endorse the learned Advocate-General's remarks in connection with my humble self. I think that he was entirely fair to me in all the statements that he has made, because it is very true and I have no desire whatsoever to conceal from this Court the fact that to preach disaffection towards the existing system of Government has become almost a passion with me, and the learned Advocate-General is also entirely in the right when he says that my preaching of disaffection did not commence with my connection with *Young India*, but that it commenced much earlier and in the statement that I am about to read, it will be my painful duty to admit before this Court that it commenced much earlier than the period stated by the Advocate-General. It is the most painful duty with me, but I have to discharge that duty knowing the responsibility that rests upon me, and I wish to endorse all the blame that the learned Advocate-General has thrown on my shoulders in connection with the Bombay, the Madras and the Chauri Chaura occurrences. Thinking over these deeply and sleeping over them night after night, it is impossible to dissociate myself from the diabolical crimes of Chauri Chaura or the mad outrages in Bombay and Madras. He is quite right when he says that, as a man of responsibility, a man having received a fair share of education, having had a fair share of experience of this world, I should know the consequences of every one of my acts. I knew that I was playing with fire. I ran the risk and, if I was set free, I would still do the same.[1] I know that I was feeling it so every day and I have felt it also this morning that I would have failed in my duty if I did not say what I said here just now.

I wanted to avoid violence. I want to avoid violence.[2] Non-violence is the first article of my faith. It is also the last article of my creed. But I had to make my choice. I had either to submit to a system which I considered had done an irreparable harm to my country, or incur the risk of the mad fury of my people bursting forth when they understood the truth from my lips. I know that my people have sometimes gone mad; I am deeply sorry for it. I am, therefore, here to submit not to a light penalty but to the highest penalty. I do not ask for mercy. I do not ask for any extenuating act of clemency. I am here to invite and cheer-

[1] & [2] These sentences do not occur in the official transcript.

fully[1] submit to the highest penalty that can be inflicted upon me for what in law is a deliberate crime and what appears to me to be the highest duty of a citizen. The only course open to you, the Judge, is as I am just going to say in my statement, either to resign your post, or inflict on me the severest penalty, if you believe that the system and the law you are assisting to administer are good for the people of this country and that my activity is therefore injurious to the public weal. I do not expect that kind of conversion, but[2] by the time I have finished with my statement, you will, perhaps, have a glimpse of what is raging within my breast to run this maddest risk[3] that a sane man can run.

The statement was then read out.

STATEMENT

I owe it perhaps to the Indian public and to the public in England, to placate which this prosecution is mainly taken up, that I should explain why, from a staunch loyalist and co-operator, I have become an uncompromising disaffectionist and non-co-operator. To the Court, too, I should say why I plead guilty to the charge of promoting disaffection towards the Government established by law in India.

My public life began in 1893 in South Africa in troubled weather. My first contact with British authority in that country was not of a happy character. I discovered that as a man and an Indian I had no rights. More correctly, I discovered that I had no rights as a man because I was an Indian.

But I was not baffled. I thought that this treatment of Indians was an excrescence upon a system that was intrinsically and mainly good. I gave the Government my voluntary and hearty co-operation, criticizing it freely where I felt it was faulty, but never wishing its destruction. Consequently, when the existence of the Empire was threatened in 1899 by the Boer challenge, I offered my services to it,[4] raised a volunteer ambulance corps and served at several actions that took place for the relief of Ladysmith.[5] Similarly in 1906, at the time of the Zulu revolt, I raised a stretcher-bearer party and served till the end of the rebellion.[6] On both these

[1] *Young India* has this word here.
[2] This part of the sentence does not occur in the official report.
[3] The official report has "the maddest risks".
[4] *Vide* Vol. III, pp. 113-4.
[5] ibid., pp. 137-41.
[6] *Vide* Vol. V, pp. 369-73.

occasions I received medals and was even mentioned in despatches. For my work in South Africa I was given by Lord Hardinge a Kaiser-i-Hind Gold Medal.[1] When the War broke out in 1914 between England and Germany, I raised a volunteer ambulance corps in London consisting of the then resident Indians in London, chiefly students.[2] Its work was acknowledged by the authorities to be valuable. Lastly, in India, when a special appeal was made at the War Conference in Delhi in 1918 by Lord Chelmsford for recruits, I struggled at the cost of my health to raise a corps in Kheda[3] and the response was being made when the hostilities ceased and orders were received that no more recruits were wanted. In all these efforts at service, I was actuated by the belief that it was possible by such services to gain a status of full equality in the Empire for my countrymen.

The first shock came in the shape of the Rowlatt Act, a law designed to rob the people of all real freedom. I felt called upon to lead an intensive agitation against it. Then followed the Punjab horrors beginning with the massacre at Jallianwala Bagh and culminating in crawling orders, public floggings and other indescribable humiliations. I discovered, too, that the plighted word of the Prime Minister to the Mussalmans of India regarding the integrity of Turkey and the holy places of Islam was not likely to be fulfilled. But, in spite of the forebodings and the grave warnings of friends, at the Amritsar Congress in 1919,[4] I fought for co-operation and working the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms, hoping that the Prime Minister would redeem his promise to the Indian Mussalmans, that the Punjab wound would be healed and that the reforms, inadequate and unsatisfactory though they were, marked a new era of hope in the life of India.

But all that hope was shattered. The Khilafat promise was not to be redeemed. The Punjab crime was white-washed and most culprits went not only unpunished, but remained in service and some continued to draw pensions from the Indian revenue, and in some cases were even rewarded. I saw, too, that not only did the reforms not mark a change of heart, but they were only a method of further draining India of her wealth and of prolonging her servitude.

[1] *Vide* Vol. XIII, pp. 170 & 173

[2] *Vide* Vol. XII, pp, 533-4.

[3] *Vide* Vol. XIV, pp. 439-43.

[4] *Vide* Vol. XVI, pp. 363-7.

I came reluctantly to the conclusion that the British connection had made India more helpless than she ever was before, politically and economically. A disarmed India has no power of resistance against any aggressor if she wanted to engage in an armed conflict with him. So much is this the case that some of our best men consider that India must take generations before she can achieve the Dominion status. She has become so poor that she has little power of resisting famines. Before the British advent, India spun and wove in her millions of cottages just the supplement she needed for adding to her meagre agricultural resources. This cottage industry, so vital for India's existence, has been ruined by incredibly heartless and inhuman processes as described by English witnesses. Little do town-dwellers know how the semi-starved masses of India are slowly sinking to lifelessness. Little do they know that their miserable comfort represents the brokerage they get for the work they do for the foreign exploiter, that the profits and the brokerage are sucked from the masses. Little do they realize that the Government established by law in British India is carried on for this exploitation of the masses. No sophistry, no jugglery in figures can explain away the evidence that the skeletons in many villages present to the naked eye. I have no doubt whatsoever that both England and the town-dwellers of India will have to answer, if there is a God above, for this crime against humanity which is perhaps unequalled in history. The law itself in this country has been used to serve the foreign exploiter. My unbiassed examination of the Punjab Martial Law cases has led me to believe that at least ninety-five per cent of convictions were wholly bad.[1] My experience of political cases in India leads one to the conclusion that in nine out of every ten cases the condemned men were totally innocent. Their crime consisted in the love of their country. In ninety-nine cases out of hundred, justice has been denied to Indians as against Europeans in the Courts of India. This is not an exaggerated picture. It is the experience of almost every Indian who has had anything to do with such cases. In my opinion, the administration of the law is thus prostituted consciously or unconsciously for the benefit of the exploiter.

The greatest misfortune is that Englishmen and their Indian associates in the administration of the country do not know that they are engaged in the crime I have attempted to describe. I am satisfied that many English and Indian officials honestly believe that they are administering one of the best systems devised in

[1] *Vide* Vol. XIX, pp. 214-20.

the world and that India is making steady though slow progress. They do not know that a subtle but effective system of terrorism and an organized display of force on the one hand, and the deprivation of all powers of retaliation or self-defence on the other, have emasculated the people and induced in them the habit of simulation. This awful habit has added to the ignorance and the self-deception of the administrators. Section 124 A under which I am happily charged is perhaps the prince among the political sections of the Indian Penal Code designed to suppress the liberty of the citizen. Affection cannot be manufactured or regulated by law. If one has no affection for a person or system[1], one should be free to give the fullest expression to his disaffection, so long as he does not contemplate, promote or incite to violence. But the section under which Mr. Banker and I are charged is one under which mere promotion of disaffection is a crime. I have studied some of the cases tried under it, and I know that some of the most loved of India's patriots have been convicted under it. I consider it a privilege, therefore, to be charged under it. I have endeavoured to give in their briefest outline the reasons for my disaffection. I have no personal ill will against any single administrator, much less can I have any disaffection towards the King's person. But I hold it to be a virtue to be disaffected towards a Government which in its totality has done more harm to India than any previous system. India is less manly under the British rule than she ever was before. Holding such a belief, I consider it to be a sin to have affection for the system. And it has been a precious privilege for me to be able to write what I have in the various articles tendered in evidence against me.

In fact, I believe that I have rendered a service to India and England by showing in non-co-operation the way out of the unnatural state in which both are living. In my humble opinion, non-co-operation with evil is as much a duty as is co-operation with good. But, in the past, non-co-operation has been deliberately expressed in violence to the evil-doer. I am endeavouring to show to my countrymen that violent non-co-operation only multiplies evil and that, as evil can only be sustained by violence, withdrawal of support of evil requires complete abstention from violence. Non-violence implies voluntary submission to the penalty for non-co-operation with evil. I am here, therefore, to invite and submit cheerfully to the highest penalty that can be inflicted upon

[1] The original draft has "thing".

me for what in law is a deliberate crime and what appears to me to be the highest duty of a citizen. The only course open to you, the Judge, is either to resign your post and thus dissociate yourself from evil, if you feel that the law you are called upon to administer is an evil and that in reality I am innocent; or to inflict on me the severest penalty if you believe that the system and the law you are assisting to administer are good for the people of this country and that my activity is, therefore, injurious to the public weal.[1]

COURT: Mr. Banker, do you wish to say anything to the Court as regards the sentences?

MR. BANKER: I only want to say that I had the privilege of printing these articles and I plead guilty to the charge. I have got nothing to say as regards the sentence.

The following is the full text of the judgment:

Mr. Gandhi, you have made my task easy in one way by pleading guilty to the charge. Nevertheless what remains, namely, the determination of a just sentence, is perhaps as difficult a proposition as a judge in this country could have to face. The law is no respecter of persons. Nevertheless, it will be impossible to ignore the fact that you are in a different category from any person I have ever tried or am likely to have to try. It would be impossible to ignore the fact that, in the eyes of millions of your countrymen, you are a great patriot and a great leader. Even those who differ from you in politics look upon you as a man of high ideals and of noble and of even saintly life. I have to deal with you in one character only. It is not my duty and I do not presume to judge or criticize you in any other character. It is my duty to judge you as a man subject to the law, who has by his own admission broken the law and committed what to an ordinary man must appear to be grave offences against the State. I do not forget that you have constantly preached against violence and that you have on many occasions, as I am willing to believe, done much to prevent violence, but having regard to the nature of your political teaching and the nature of many of those to whom it is addressed, how you could have continued to believe that violence would not be the inevitable consequence it passes my capacity to understand.

There are probably few people in India who do not sincerely regret that you should have made it impossible for any Government to leave you at liberty. But it is so. I am trying to balance what is due to you against what appears to me to be necessary in the interests of the public, and I propose, in passing sentence, to follow the precedent of a case, in many respects similar to this case, that was decided some 12 years ago, I mean the case against

[1] The signed, handwritten statement is available in photostat in *Trial of Gandhiji*, pp. 168-92.

Mr. Bal Gangadhar Tilak under this same section. The sentence that was passed upon him as it finally stood was a sentence of simple imprisonment for six years. You will not consider it unreasonable, I think, that you should be classed with Mr. Tilak, and that is the sentence, two years' simple imprisonment on each count of the charge, i.e., six years in all, which I feel it my duty to pass upon you and I should like to say in doing so that, if the course of events in India should make it possible for the Government to reduce the period and release you, no one will be better pleased than I.

THE JUDGE (to Mr. Banker): I assume that you have been to a large extent under the influence of your chief. The sentence that I propose to pass upon you is simple imprisonment for six months on each of the first two counts, that is, simple imprisonment for one year and a fine of a thousand rupees on the third count, with six months' simple imprisonment in default.

Mr. Gandhi said:

I would say one word. Since you have done me the honour of recalling the trial of the late Lokamanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak, I just want to say that I consider it to be the proudest privilege and honour to be associated with his name. So far as the sentence itself is concerned, I certainly consider that it is as light as any judge would inflict on me, and so far as the whole proceedings are concerned, I must say that I could not have expected greater courtesy.

Then the friends of Mr. Gandhi crowded round him as the Judge left the court, and fell at his feet. There was much sobbing on the part of both men and women. But all the while Mr. Gandhi was smiling and cool and giving encouragement to everybody who came to him. Mr. Banker also was smiling and taking this in a light-hearted way. After all his friends had taken leave of him, Mr. Gandhi was taken out of the Court to the Sabarmati Jail. And thus the great trial finished.

Young India, 23-3-1922



TRIAL IN SESSIONS COURT, AHMEDABAD

From a painting. Courtesy: Ravishankar



58. *MESSAGE TO THE COUNTRY*[1]

[AHMEDABAD,
March 18, 1922]

I am delighted that heavenly peace reigned supreme throughout the country during the last six days. If it continues to the end of the chapter, it is bound to be brief and illuminating.

Speeches and Writings of M. K. Gandhi, p. 758

59. *REMARK ON REMOVAL FROM SABARMATI JAIL*

SABARMATI JAIL,
[*March 20, 1922*][2]

M. K. Gandhi remarked that the one thing which had kept his spirits up since his arrest was the fact that the country had paid heed to his message and no outbreak of violence had occurred.

Bombay Secret Abstracts, p. 454

60. *INTERVIEW TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI*[3]

YERAVDA JAIL,
POONA,
April 1, 1922

In answer to questions about his food Mahatmaji said he was given goat's milk and bread, milk being given all at a time. He had cut down his three meals to two. Asked what he did for fruits, he said he was given two oranges a day. Raisins which he had mentioned as a part of his usual diet had not yet been ordered to be given. . . .

. . . Mahatmaji told me that he did not want any complaints to be made about his life in jail.

The Hindu, 3-4-1922

1 After the sentence and before he left the Court, Gandhiji asked the General Secretary of the Congress who was near him to convey this message to the country.

2 Gandhiji and Shankerlal G. Banker were removed by special train from Sabarmati Jail to Yeravda Jail on the midnight of March 20.

3 The interview, during which Devdas Gandhi was present, took place in Yeravda Jail, Poona. For the full report, *vide* Appendix II.

61. *A PRIMER*[1]

Friday, Chaitra Vad 3 [April 14, 1922]

TO THE TEACHERS

This primer should be regarded as an experiment.

Shri Narahari[2], Kaka and other teachers should go through it and show it to Professor Gidwani[3], Ballubhai[4] and Shri Diwan[5], but only if they approve of it. If it is passed by these gentlemen, it should finally be sent to Anandshankarbhai[6] and should be published if he, too, approves of it.

Anandanand,[7] Valji Desai[8], Chhaganlal, Maganlal, Devdas, Jamnadas,[9] and others may also go through it. If possible, a copy should be sent to Mahadev too. Let no one think even in his dream that it should be published because I have prepared it. The labour I have put in should also be no consideration, for I have enjoyed writing it.

I have followed, in writing this, exactly the same method by which I used to teach children at Tolstoy Farm and other places. I used to act as "mother" there.

[1] The letter to Hakim Ajmal Khan, April 14, 1922, mentions the completion of this primer of the Gujarati language. The Note to the Teachers and Foreword carry the date *Chaitra Vad* 3, which corresponds to April 14, 1922. The primer was published in 1951 under the title *Balpothi* by the Navajivan Publishing House.

[2] Narahari Dwarkadas Parikh, a member of Gandhiji's team of constructive workers in Sabarmati Ashram since 1917

[3] A. T. Gidwani, Professor, Muir Central College, Allahabad; later, Principal, Gujarat Vidyapith, Ahmedabad

[4]&[5] Ballubhai Thakore and Jivanlal Diwan, educationists and Congress workers of Ahmedabad

[6] Anandshankar B. Dhruva (1869-1942); Sanskrit scholar and man of letters; Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Benares Hindu University, 1920-37

[7] Swami Anandanand, Manager of Navajivan Press during the decade following *Navajivan's* first publication in 1919; edited *Navajivan* for some time during 1922-24 when Gandhiji was in jail.

[8] Valji Govindji Desai, sometime lecturer in English, Gujarat College, Ahmedabad; resigned from service and joined Gandhiji; translated *Satyagraha in South Africa* and other works of Gandhiji; worked on the editorial staff of *Young India*.

[9] Jamnadas Gandhi, son of Khushalchand Gandhi, Gandhiji's cousin, and younger brother of Chhaganlal and Maganlal Gandhi

My original idea was to write thirty lessons. But, on second thoughts, I felt that it would be better to limit the size of the primer. Let children read two or three primers in a year.

There should be no objection to Narahari and Kaka making such changes as they may wish to.

Any letter informing [me] whether it is proposed to publish this primer or any correspondence about it should be in English. I believe that the [Jail] Superintendent will let it come through in that case.

If it is decided to publish the primer, it would be better to add pictures of the spinning-wheel, etc. Good paper should be used and the type must be large.

I certainly intend to write about Hinduism.[1]

MOHANDAS GANDHI

[PS.] I think it would be better not to give my name as the author of this primer.[2]

FOREWORD

This primer presupposes that the pupil has already spent a year or less in spinning, learning the letters of the alphabet, both Devanagari and Prakrit, and simple tables.

I have used in the primer the words *laghushanka*[3] and *apaman*[4] because I could not avoid them. I have used the word *laghushanka* in place of *peshab*, thinking that it would be good if children learnt this fine word. *Apaman* has been kept, as a milder word could not be found.

The difficult words in Lesson 12 have been deliberately introduced.

The aim which has been kept in view in preparing this primer is that the pupil should be able to put into practice whatever he learns. Nothing has been included which is not within the range of his daily experience.

The presentation of the lessons in this primer in the form of dialogue between a mother and her child has a touch of artificiality about it, as most Indian mothers today do not perform their duty of instructing children, nor are they equipped for the task.

[1] When Gandhiji was sentenced, Kaka Kalelkar had requested him to write in jail a primer on Hinduism.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Jail Superintendent, Yeravda", 12-8-1922.

[3] Passing urine

[4] Insult

This artificiality has been introduced to set forth an ideal, in the hope that now some mothers at any rate will do their duty towards their children. I believe that the primer can be completed in three to six months.

Teachers should make the child write out every lesson in an attractive hand.

The lessons have been planned to serve as a basis for the teacher, who may elaborate them further as his zeal and enthusiasm may inspire him to do.

AUTHOR

LESSON 1: MORNING

"Get up, my child, it is morning."

"I still feel sleepy."

"Look, your sister is up; you, too, should get up and brush your teeth; and then say your prayers. It is past four. Don't you hear the birds singing? Your sister Shanta has started singing a *bhajan*[1]."

LESSON 2: BRUSHING THE TEETH

"Have you cleaned your teeth? Let me see your teeth. They look yellow. You have not brushed them properly. The tongue, too, is not clean. You have not taken enough care to remove the coating. What stick did you use?"

"It was from the *babul* tree."

"Why did you not use one from the *neem* tree?"

"It is rather bitter."

"What if it is? The mouth feels fresh afterwards. You will come to like the bitterness when you get used to it."

LESSON 3: PREPARING FOR THE "BHAJAN"

We should not go to the *bhajan* without cleaning ourselves first. Rheum in the eyes marks one as dirty. Our bodies and minds should be clean when singing *bhajans* to God. During prayers, one should sit erect with crossed legs and folded hands. We should not talk with anyone, nor look at anyone. We do not see God, but He sees us.

I see you even when you are asleep, being awake myself, but you do not see me. Likewise, may it not be that God sees us, even if we do not see Him?

[1] Devotional song

LESSON 4: THE "BHAJAN"

Dear, very dear to me is the name of *Dada*[1] Rama,
Little use have I for all learning else;
Dear, very dear to me is the name of *Dada* Rama.
Father dear, show your love for me,
Have sweet songs about Govind written on my slate;
For dear, dear to me is the name of *Dada* Rama.
All I wish to hear is stories and songs about Shri Rama,
Of Him do I constantly think, and on Him meditate;
For dear, dear to me is the name of *Dada* Rama.

—KALIDAS VASAVADA

LESSON 5: EXERCISE

"What exercise did you take after the *bhajan* today?"

"I did some *dand*[2] exercises, and we also ran, all of us together."

"Do you keep your mouth closed while running? We should always breathe through the nostrils. Do you take any other exercise?"

"Sometimes we practise *oothbes*[3] and occasionally we do wrestling. We look upon exercise also as part of games. Among the games we play are *aatapaata*, *saat-tali*, *hututu*, *mag-matali*, *moi-dandia* and so on, as we feel inclined from day to day. As we take some exercise in the morning after the *bhajan*, so there is always something in the evening too."

LESSON 6: THE SPINNING-WHEEL

"Madhu, how much did you spin today?"

"Mother, I spun only six coils today."

"Why so little? Generally you spin not less than eight."

"Yes, mother, I felt a little lazy today and the sliver, too, must have been rather bad, so the thread kept snapping."

"For how many hours were you at the spinning-wheel?"

"I worked at it for three hours. You will of course say that it is too little. I admit it is. I told you I felt lazy today. If possible, I shall work an hour extra tomorrow. I do want to spin at least for four hours daily."

[1] Grandfather
[2] & [3] Kinds of physical exercise

"You will discover that in the extra hour put in, you will not be able to do as much as you could have in the hour that you lost. Time lost is never recovered. Laziness is our enemy."

LESSON 7: THE FUN OF SPINNING

"Do you enjoy spinning?"

"Spinning is as much fun as playing when the spindle is not bent and the strap fits properly, when the wheel turns noiselessly and the thread does not snap. When I turn the spinning-wheel fast enough, it produces a sweet sound, like that of a *bhambhutia*[1] and it gives pleasure. Moreover, I feel happy thinking that the yarn spun by me will be used to make clothes for me."

LESSON 8: CLEANLINESS

"I find dirt in your nails today. There is dirt in your ears too. Did you have a bath today?"

"I never omit to have a bath."

"Do you think that all you have to do to take a bath is to pour water on your body or take a dip in the river? Having a bath means cleaning all parts of the body carefully. The body should be rubbed as water is poured over it. Dirt should be removed from the ears, armpits and other parts. The nails should be examined. When the nails are dirty, how can anyone eat with the hand? Like the body, our clothes, bedding, etc., should also be clean. Cleanliness is a sign of one's diligence. Dirt is a sign of idleness."

LESSON 9: BAD HABITS

"There is a very strong smell in our village. What can be the reason, mother?"

"Well, son, some of our old bad habits are responsible for it. People, instead of taking the children far out of the village, let them sit for stools in the lanes, and themselves do not go farther than the outskirts of the village. How is it possible, then, to pass by a village in the morning? People do not hesitate to pass urine at any spot. We insult mother earth by acting in this way. Stools should be immediately covered over with earth. A cat digs up earth and, after relieving itself, covers the stools with it. Human beings should do the same."

[1] May mean 'spinning top' or 'beetle' or both

LESSON 10: THE FIELD AND THE "VADI"

"Do you know what crops grow in our village?"

"Yes, mother; wheat, gram, *bajra*, *tuvar*, *jowar*, etc., according to the season. The absence of a *vadi* near the village is felt very badly. There are plenty of trees round the neighbouring village; one enjoys roaming around them. There are *neem* trees, and tamarind trees as well. There are a few mango trees too. Some jujube plants also grow here and there. Quite a few vegetables are also grown in that *vadi*, beans, brinjals, fenugreek, java radish, lady's fingers, radishes and so on. Would it not be nice if the people of our village too grew such trees?"

"Ours is a poor village. There is no unity among the residents, so the people rest content with the crops that grow in our fields."

"I shall certainly plant some fruit trees, at any rate, when I grow up."

"May God fulfil your wish."

LESSON 11: HOUSEWORK

"Look here, son, you should help with the housework, just as your sister Shanta does."

"But Shanta is a girl; a boy plays and studies."

Shanta cried out: "Do we not also wish to play and study?"

"Do I prevent you? Perhaps you like working in the home, too."

Mother said: "Shouldn't boys work, then?"

Madhu replied: "A boy must pay more attention to his studies, as he will have to earn a living when he grows up."

Mother said: "That is a wrong idea altogether. There is much to learn in housework. You do not know what you can learn if you sweep the house, help with the cooking, wash clothes and clean utensils. You do not know how much you have to use your eyes, hands and brain in housework. But, then, we use them without effort and so do not know. True education consists in gradually acquiring experience in this way. Then again, by doing housework, you will acquire greater skill, become stronger in body and, when you have grown up, will not be dependent on anyone. I would say, you need to learn and do housework as much as your sister Shanta does."

[1] Farm growing fruits and vegetables

LESSON 12: THE GLORY OF GOD

"Shanta and Madhu, do you, sister and brother, ever look up at the sky?"

Shanta said: "You yourself taught us to have *darshan*[1] of the sun. How can one do this without looking up at the sky?"

Madhu said: "And have you forgotten that you show us the moon waxing and waning? The small crescent moon two days old and the large moon on full-moon day—how can one fail to observe this change?"

Mother said: "Well, then, what else do you see in the sky?"

Shanta: "What a great many stars! What fun it would be, I feel, if I could have some of them!"

Madhu: "Then again, both during day and night clouds often cover up the sun, the moon and the stars for a while and then go away. We often enjoy seeing this."

Mother: "Who created all this and the earth on which we walk?"

Madhu: "You yourself told us that God created all this."

Shanta: "And it is you who time and again make us sing that Hindi song. Come, let us sing it:

"Thou hast created this whole universe, my God!
Dearer to me than my very soul, Thou art without compare, we know,
Thou art brother and Thou friend, Thou art father and Thou mother,
All this universe is filled with Thee."

[From Gujarati]

Balpothi; also S.N. 8081

[1] Sight of person, object or place considered holy

62. *LETTER TO HAKIM AJMAL KHAN*[1]

YERAVDA JAIL,
April 14, 1922

DEAR HAKIMJI,

Prisoners are allowed one visit every three months and to write and receive one letter during the same period. I have had a visit from Devdas and Rajagopalachari. And I am now writing the permitted letter.

You will remember that Mr. Banker and I were convicted on the 18th March on a Saturday. On Monday night about 10 p.m. we received notice that we were to be removed to an unknown destination. At 11.30 p.m. the Superintendent of Police took us to the special that was awaiting us at Sabarmati. We were given a basket of fruit for the journey and we were well looked after during the whole journey. The doctor of the Sabarmati Jail had allowed me, for health and religious reasons, the food to which I am used, and to Mr. Banker bread and milk and fruit for medical reasons. Cow's milk for Mr. Banker and goat's for me were, therefore, ordered on the way by the Deputy Superintendent who was escorting us.

We were taken off at Khirki where a prison van was waiting to take us to the jail from where I am writing this.

I had heard bad accounts of this Jail from ex-prisoners and was therefore prepared to face difficulties in my path. I had told Mr. Banker that if my hand-spinning was stopped, I would have to refuse food as I had taken a vow on the Hindu New Year's Day to spin every day at least for half an hour except when I was ill or travelling. He should not, therefore, I told him, be shocked if I had to refuse food and that he should on no account join me out of false sympathy. He had seen my view-point.

We were not, therefore, surprised when, on reaching the Jail about 5.30 p.m., I was told by the Superintendent that he could not allow the spinning-wheel which was with us nor could we be allowed to take the fruit that was with us. I pointed out that hand-spinning was a matter of vow with me and that, as a matter of fact, both of us were permitted to do it everyday at the Sabarmati Jail. Thereupon we were told, Yeroda was not Sabarmati.

[1] This was withheld by the Jail authorities; *vide* the following item.

I told the Superintendent too that both of us were permitted at the Sabarmati jail for health reasons to sleep outside, but that was not to be expected at this Jail.

Thus the first impression was rather unhappy. I felt however totally undisturbed. The semi-fast of Tuesday following that of Monday did me no harm. I know that Mr. Banker felt it. He has night terrors and requires someone near him. And this was his first rough experience in life perhaps. I am a seasoned jail-bird.

The Superintendent came the next morning to question us. I saw that the first impression did not do justice to the Superintendent. The previous evening he was evidently in a hurry. We were received after the regular time and he was totally unprepared for what was undoubtedly to him a strange request. He discovered, however, that my request for the spinning-wheel was not a matter of cussedness, but rightly or wrongly a real religious necessity. He saw too that it was no question of hunger-striking. He gave orders that the spinning-wheels should be restored to both of us. He realized too that both of us would need the diet we had mentioned.

And so far as I have been able to observe, the animal comforts are well looked after in this Jail. Both the Superintendent and the Jailor appear to me to be tactful and have pleasant manners. The first day's experience I count as of no consequence. The relations between the Superintendent and the Jailor and myself are as cordial as they can be between a prisoner and his keepers.

But it is evident to me that the human element is largely, if not entirely, absent in the jail system. The Superintendent informs me that all prisoners are treated as I am treated If that is so, as animals prisoners could hardly be better cared for. But, for the human sentiment, there is no accommodation in the Jail Regulations.

This is what the Jail Committee consisting of the Collector, a clergyman and some others did the next morning. This Committee met quite by coincidence the very next day after our admission. The members came to find our needs. I mentioned that Mr. Banker suffered from nervousness and that he should be kept with me and that his cell should be kept open. I cannot describe to you the contemptuous and callous indifference with which the request was treated. As the members turned their backs upon us, one of them remarked, 'nonsensical'. They knew nothing of Mr. Banker's past or his position in life or of his upbringing. It was none of their business to find all this out and to discover the cause for what appeared to me to be the most natural

request. It was certainly of greater importance for him than his food that he should be able to have undisturbed rest at night.

Within one hour after the interview, a warder came ordering Mr. Banker to be removed to another quarter. I felt like a mother suddenly deprived of her only child. It was by a stroke of good fortune that Mr. Banker was arrested with me and that we were tried together. At Sabarmati I had written to the District Magistrate that I would deem it a courtesy if the authorities did not separate Mr. Banker from me and had told him that we could be mutually helpful if he was kept with me. I was reading the *Gita* with him and he was nursing my weak body. Mr. Banker lost his mother only a few months ago. When I met her a few days before her death, she said she would die in peace as her son should be quite safe under my care. Little did the noble lady know how utterly powerless I would prove to protect her son in the hour of his need. As Mr. Banker left me, I entrusted him to God's care and assured him that God would take care of him and protect him.

He has been since permitted to come to me for about half an hour to teach me carding, which he knows. This he does in the presence of a warder in order to see that we do not talk about anything else than the purpose for which he is brought to me.

I am trying to coax the Inspector-General and the Superintendent to let me read the *Gita* with Mr. Banker during the few minutes he is allowed to come. This request is under consideration.

In fairness to the authorities, I must mention that Mr. Banker's animal comforts are well looked after and that he is looking not bad at all. He is gradually losing his nervousness.

It has required the use of all my tact to retain possession of seven books, five of which are purely religious and the other two are an old dictionary I prize and an Urdu manual presented to me by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad[1]. Strict orders given to the Superintendent were that prisoners were not to be allowed any books save the Jail library books. I was given the option of presenting the said seven books to the Jail library and then using them. Whilst I was prepared to do so with my other books, I gently told the Superintendent that to ask me to present religious books which I was using or gifts with a history was like asking me to give up my right arm. I do not know how much tact the Superintendent

[1] 1888-1958; Congress leader and scholar of Koranic theology; President of the Indian National Congress, 1923, 1940-45; Education Minister, Government of India, 1947-58

had to use in persuading his superiors to let me retain those books.

I am now told that I could import at my own expense periodicals. I had said a newspaper was a periodical. He seemed to agree, but he had his doubts about a newspaper being allowed. I had not the courage to mention the *Chronicle* weekly. But I mentioned *The Times of India* weekly. That seemed to the Superintendent to be too political. I could name the *Police News*, *Tit-bits* or *Blackwoods*. This matter is, however, quite beyond the Superintendent's province. What is to be considered a periodical will probably be finally decided by His Excellency the Governor-in-Council.

Then, there was the question of the use of a knife. If I was to toast my bread (I could not digest it without), I must cut it up in slices and, if I was to squeeze my lemons, I must cut them also. But a knife was a 'lethal weapon' and most dangerous in the hands of a prisoner. I gave the Superintendent the option of withdrawing bread and lemons or giving me the use of a knife. At last the use of my own pen-knife has been restored to me. It has to remain in the custody of my convict warder to be given to me whenever I may require it. It goes back to the Jailor every evening and comes back every morning to the convict warder.

You may not know the species. Convict warders are those long-term prisoners who by their good behaviour may be given a warder's dress and may be, under supervision, entrusted with light responsibilities. One such warder who has been convicted for a murder is in charge of me during the day and another reminding me of Shaukat Ali's size is added for night duty. This addition was made when the Inspector-General at last decided to leave my cell open. Both the warders are quite inoffensive. They never interfere with me. And I never engage in any conversation with them. I have to speak to the day warder for some of my wants. But beyond that I have no intercourse with them.

I am in a triangular block. One side (the longest) of the triangle which falls west has eleven cells. I have as my companion in the yard an Arabian State prisoner (I suppose). He does not speak Hindustani. I unfortunately do not know Arabic; therefore, our intercourse is restricted to morning greetings. The base of this triangle is a solid wall and the shortest side is a barbed-wire fence with a gate opening on to a spacious open ground. The triangle is divided by a lime line beyond which I was not to go. Thus I had about seventy feet length for exercise. As an illustraion of the want of human touch, I mentioned the white line to Mr. Khambata, the Cantonment Magistrate, who is one of the visit-

ing Magistrates. He did not like the restriction and reported likewise. The whole length of the triangle is now open for exercise to me giving me probably 140 feet length. My eyes are set upon the open space just mentioned. But that is perhaps too human to be permissible. Anyway, seeing that the white line is gone, the barbed-wire fence may, I have suggested, be disregarded so far as my exercise is concerned. It is rather a ticklish problem for the Superintendent and he is taking time to consider it.

The fact is I am an isolation prisoner. I must not talk with anybody. Some of the Dharwar prisoners are in this jail, so is the great Gangadharrao of Belgaum. Verumal Begraj, the reformer of Sukker, is also in this jail and so is Lalit, one of the Bombay editors. I cannot see any of them. What harm I can do to them if I live in their midst, I do not know. They can certainly do me no harm. We cannot plot our escape. It will be just the thing the authorities would relish if we did plot. If it is a question of infecting with my views, they are all inoculated. Here in the Jail I could only make them more enthusiastic about the spinning-wheel.

But if I have mentioned my isolation to you, it is not by way of complaint. I am happy in it. By nature I like solitude. Silence pleases me. And I am able to indulge in studies which I prize, but which I was bound to neglect outside.

But not all prisoners can enjoy isolation. It is so unnecessary and unhuman. The fault lies in the false classification. All prisoners are practically grouped together and no Superintendent, however humane he may be, can possibly do justice to the variety of men and women that come under his custody and care, unless he has a free hand. Therefore, the only thing he does is to study their bodies to the entire neglect of the man within.

Add to this the fact that the jails are being prostituted for political ends so that political persecution follows a political prisoner even inside the prison wall.

I must finish the picture of my jail life by giving you the routine. The cell itself is nice—quite clean and airy. The permission to sleep outside is a blessing to me, being used to sleeping in the open. I rise at 4 a.m. for prayers. The Ashram people will be interested to know that I recite the morning verses unfailingly and sing some of those hymns I have by heart. At 6.30 a.m., I commence my studies. No light is allowed. As soon therefore as one can read, I commence work. It stops at 7 p.m., after which it is impossible to read or write without artificial light. I retire at 8 p.m. after the usual Ashram prayer. My studies include reading the Koran,

Ramayana by Tulsidas, books on Christianity given by Mr. Standing, study of Urdu. These literary studies receive six hours. Four hours are given to hand-spinning and carding. At first, I gave only 30 minutes to spinning when I had only a limited supply of slivers. The authorities have kindly given me some cotton. It is exceptionally dirty. It is perhaps good training for a beginner in carding. I give one hour to carding and three to spinning. Anasuyabai and now, Maganlal Gandhi, have sent slivers. I would like them to stop sending slivers, but one of them may send good clean cotton, not more than two pounds at a time. I am anxious to make my own slivers. I think that every spinner should learn carding. I was able to card after one lesson. It is harder to practise but much easier to learn than spinning.

This spinning is growing on me. I seem daily to be coming nearer to the poorest of the poor and to that extent to God. I regard the four hours to be the most profitable part of the day. The fruit of my labour is visible before me. Not an impure thought enters my mind during the four hours. The mind wanders whilst I read the *Gita*, the Koran, the *Ramayana*. But the mind is fixed whilst I am turning the wheel, or working the bow. I know that it may not and cannot mean all this to everyone. I have so identified the spinning-wheel with the economic salvation of pauper India that it has for me a fascination all its own. There is a serious competition going on in my mind between spinning and carding on the one hand and literary pursuits on the other. And I should not be surprised if, in my next letter, I report to you an increase in the hours of spinning and carding.

Please tell Maulana Abdul Bari Saheb that I expect him to compete with me in spinning which, he informed me, he had just taken up. His example will lead many to take up this great occupation as a duty.

The Ashram people may be informed that I have finished the primer I promised to, which I presume that I shall be permitted to send to them.[1] I hope to be able to overtake the religious primer I promised to write, as also the history of the struggle in South Africa.

Instead of three, for the sake of convenience, I am taking two meals only here. But I am taking quite enough. The Superintendent is offering every convenience in the shape of food. For the last three days he has procured for me goat's milk, butter,

[1] Gandhiji was not allowed by the authorities to forward the manuscript of the Gujarati Primer to the Ashram; *vide* "Letter to Jail Superintendent, Yeravda", 12-8-1922.

and I expect in a day or two to be baking my own chapatis.

I am allowed two perfectly new warm, heavy blankets, a coir mat and two sheets. A pillow has been added since. It was hardly necessary. I used books or my extra clothing as a pillow. The latter has been added as a result of the conversation with Rajagopalachari. There is privacy for bathing which is allowed daily. A separate cell is allowed as a work-room whilst it is not otherwise required. Sanitary arrangements have been made perfect.

Friends, therefore, need not worry about me in any way whatsoever. I am as happy as a bird. Nor do I think I am doing less useful service here than outside. To be here is good discipline for me, and separation from co-workers was just the thing required to know whether we were an organic whole or whether our activity was one man's show—a nine days' wonder. I have no misgivings. I have, therefore, no curiosity to know what is happening outside. And if my prayers are true and from a humble heart, they, I know, are infinitely more efficacious than any amount of meddlesome activity.

I am anxious about Das's health. I shall always have cause for complaint against his good partner that she did not keep me informed of his health. Motilalji's asthma, I hope, has left him.

Do please persuade Mrs. Gandhi not to think of visiting me. Devdas created a scene when he visited me. He could not brook the idea of my standing in the Superintendent's office when he was brought in. The proud and sensitive boy burst out weeping aloud and it was with difficulty I could restrain him. He should have realized that I was a prisoner and as such I had no right to sit in the presence of the Superintendent. Seats might and should have been offered to Rajagopalachari and Devdas. But I am sure there was no discourtesy intended. I do not suppose it is usual for the Superintendent to supervise such interviews. But in my case evidently he wanted to run no risks. I would not like the scene to be repeated by Mrs. Gandhi, nor do I want a special favour to be done in my case by a seat being offered. Dignity, I am sure, consists in my standing. And we must yet wait for a while before the British people naturally and heartily extend the delicate courtesies to us in every walk of life. I am not at all anxious to have visitors and I would like friends and relations to restrain themselves.[1] Business visits may always be paid under circumstances adverse or otherwise.

[1] Gandhiji, however, had occasional visits from them; for an account of Maganlal Gandhi's interview, *vide* Appendix III.

I hope Chhotani Mian has distributed the spinning-wheels donated by him among poor Mussalman women in Panchmahals, East Khandesh and Agra. I forget the name of the missionary lady who wrote to me from Agra. Kristodas may remember.

I shall soon finish the Urdu manual. I would prize a good Urdu dictionary (and) any book you or Dr. Ansari may choose.

Please tell Shuaib I am at ease about him.

I do hope you are keeping well. To hope that you are not overworking yourself is to hope for the impossible. I can, therefore, only pray that God will keep you in health in spite of the strain.

With love to every one of the workers,

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

HAKIMJI AJMAL KHAN
DELHI

From a handwritten copy: S.N. 8011; also *Young India*, 28-2-1924

63. *LETTER TO GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY*

YERAVDA JAIL,
May 12, 1922

FROM PRISONER NO. 8677
TO
THE GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

With reference to the Government orders passed on Prisoner's letter to Hakimji Ajmal Khan, a friend of Prisoner's, and returning said letter to Prisoner with certain remarks in the said orders read out to Prisoner by the Superintendent of Yeroda Jail, Prisoner No. 8677 begs to say that on application to the Superintendent for a copy of the said orders, he says he has no authority to give Prisoner a copy thereof.

Prisoner would like to possess a copy of the said orders and send one to friends so that they may know under what circumstances Prisoner has been unable to send to friends a letter of welfare. Prisoner hereby applies for instructions to the Superintendent to give him a copy of the said orders.

Regarding the orders, so far as Prisoner recollects and understands them, the Government base their refusal to send Prisoner's letter to its destination on the ground that (i) the letter contains

reference to prisoners other than Prisoner himself, and (ii) the letter is likely to give rise to political controversy.

With regard to the first ground, Prisoner submits that the letter contains no references that are not strictly relevant to Prisoner's own personal condition and welfare.

With regard to the second ground, Prisoner respectfully contends that the possibility of a public controversy cannot be a valid ground to deprive a prisoner of the right of sending a quarterly letter of welfare to friends and relatives. The implication of the ground is, in Prisoner's opinion, dangerous in the extreme, it being that an Indian prison is a secret department. Prisoner contends that Indian prisons are an open public department subject to criticism by the public in the same manner as any other department.

Prisoner contends that his said letter is strictly one containing information regarding his personal welfare. References to other prisoners were necessary to complete the information. Prisoner would gladly correct mis-statements or exaggeration if any be discovered to him. But to send the letter in the mutilated manner suggested by the Government would be to give an erroneous idea of his condition to his friends.

Unless, therefore, the Government will forward Prisoner's letter subject to such correction that may be found necessary, Prisoner has no desire to exercise the right of sending to friends a letter of welfare, which right becomes of doubtful value under the restrictions imposed by the Government under the said orders.

M. K. GANDHI
PRISONER NO. 8677

From a handwritten copy: S.N. 8013; also *Young India*, 28-2-1924

64. LETTER TO HAKIM AJMAL KHAN[1]

YERAVDA JAIL,
May 12, 1922

DEAR HAKIMJI,

I wrote to you on 14th April a long letter giving you full information about myself. It contained messages among others to Mrs. Gandhi and Devdas. The Government have just passed orders refusing to send the letter unless I would remove material parts of it. They have given grounds for their decision, but as a

[1] This letter also was withheld by the Jail authorities.

copy of the order has been refused to me, I cannot send them to you nor can I give you the grounds so far as I recollect.

I have written to the Government questioning the validity of their grounds and offering to correct mis-statement or exaggeration in my letter if any is discovered to me. I have told them too that, if I cannot send my letter without mutilation, I have no desire to write even regulation letters to friends, which then become of doubtful value. Unless, therefore, the Government revise their decision, this intimation must be my first and last from the jail to you or other friends.

Hoping you are keeping well,

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI
PRISONER NO. 8677

HAKIM AJMAL KHAN
DELHI

From a handwritten copy: S.N. 8012; also *Young India*, 28-2-1924

65. *LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA*

YERAVDA JAIL,
August 12, 1922

TO
THE SUPERINTENDENT
YERAVDA CENTRAL JAIL

SIR,

There are regarding myself three matters pending for some time.

(1) In May last, I wrote to my friend Hakimji Ajmal Khan of Delhi the usual quarterly letter. The Government declined to forward it unless I cut out portions objected to by them. As I considered the portions strictly relevant to my condition in the Jail, I could not see my way to remove them and I respectfully notified to the Government that I did not propose to avail myself of the privilege or the right of sending to my friend the usual letter unless I could give him a full description of my condition. At the same time, I wrote a brief letter to my friend saying that the letter I had written to him was disallowed and that I did not propose to write any letter regarding my welfare unless the Government removed the restrictions imposed by them. This second letter, too, the Government have declined to send. It is this second letter which I have asked should be returned to me as the first has been.

(2) After having received permission from Col. Dalziel to write a vernacular primer[1] and the assurance that there would be no objection to my sending it to my friends for publication, I wrote the primer and gave it to Col. Dalziel for dispatch to the address mentioned in the covering letter. The Government have declined to send the primer to the address given, on the ground that prisoners cannot be permitted to publish books whilst they are serving their term. I have no wish to see my name on the primer as publisher or author. If the primer may not be published even without my name being connected with it in any way, I would like it returned to me.

(3) The Government were pleased to notify that I could be allowed periodicals. I therefore asked for permission to send for *The Times of India* weekly, the *Modern Review*—a high-class Calcutta monthly, and the *Saraswati*—a Hindi magazine. The last named has been kindly allowed. No decision has yet been received regarding the other two. I am anxiously awaiting the Government decision about them.

I remain,
Yours obediently,
M. K. GANDHI

From a handwritten copy: S.N. 8014

66. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

[YERAVDA JAIL,]
October 5, 1922

I have obtained Superintendent's permission to send this to you.

In expressing my opinion about Ramdas's intended marriage, I was hasty and yielded to blind affection—I repented after we parted and saw how one who considered himself to be a careful man could become thoughtless and blinded by affection.

I failed yesterday in my duty as father.

I feel that Ramdas would sin if he married before he knew his ideal and had not found an occupation to his liking. He wishes, and we all respect his wish, that he should marry not on the strength of my position but on that of his own merits. Hence he must now choose his own calling. That would help the parents of the intended bride to come to a decision and the girl would

[1] *Vide* "A Primer", 14-4-1922.

know where she has to go. Therefore, our first business—and now the first business of all of you who are outside—is to help Ramdas to come to a decision about his future.

If Ramdas wishes to continue his studies, he may do so. If his father who is now old can study like a boy, Ramdas who is only just entering upon his youth easily can. Or he may take up the commercial life or find himself a place in the Ashram or the Ashram Seminary or he may wish to join his brother Harilal. My strong advice is that he should not think of marrying until he has tried himself for one year in the calling of his choice.

For Ramdas to marry a girl belonging to rich parents, even though she may have an excellent character, is to court unhappiness for himself and his wife and her parents. The safest course appears to me to find a virtuous girl in one of the poorest families. He should not mind the time that may have to be devoted to the search.

I was blindly affectionate to Mrs. Gandhi too. I feel that I should do my duty by her if I continue to be 'butcher' to her. Parents ought not for their own selves impede the progress or thwart the wishes of their children. For the moment yesterday I encouraged Mrs. G[andhi] in her contrary intention. My advice to her now is that she should swallow the bitter pill of separation from Ramdas and that she should do with contentment. She should bless Ramdas if he places himself under the care of so good a soul as Rajagopalachari. I know that she will consult her own good too by adopting my advice. She must feel happy in the thought of having children who have a character to lose. It is not proper to crave for their company for ever.

You have taken upon yourself the role of Devdas. You will now realize what it means. You have to take the place of all the children. May God help you. For me, I am trying to deserve your wonderful affection.

Now for your religious difficulty. He who is altogether free from impure thoughts has attained salvation. Their total destruction can be achieved only after severe austerity. There is only one remedy for attaining the end: To match pure against impure thoughts. This is possible only through God's grace. That is attainable only by contemplating God the whole of our time and by realizing that He is in us. I should not be baffled even if the mind wanders and God's name is only on our lips. By unwearied insistence what is on the lips will soon be enthroned in the heart. Again, we must not allow any of our organs to be acted upon by a vicious thought. He who allows them to be so

acted upon perishes. We must force our organs out of the control of a wicked thought. I know that even at my age, if I were to allow all my thoughts to rule my actions, I should be undone. At the same time, we must not fret about these evil thoughts. Ours is but to persevere. The result is in the hands of God and He will worry about it. Moreover, when an impure thought haunts you, you will know that it is disloyalty to your wife. You are an ideal husband. The thought of her must help you. Ordinary remedies you know. Moderate eating and a single eye. When the eye is inclined to go astray, you must be angry to the point of plucking it out. Good books are the best company.

May God protect you from all harm.

SHETH JAMNALALJI BAJAJ
GHELABHAI MANSION
CHOWPATI
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 8010

67. *LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA*[1]

YERAVDA JAIL,
October 14, 1922

THE SUPERINTENDENT
YERAVDA CENTRAL JAIL

SIR,

With reference to Government refusal to let me have the *Modern Review*, I beg to state that the friends who accompanied my wife last week at the quarterly interview told me that the Government had announced that magazines were allowed to the prisoners. If the information is correct, I renew my request and ask for the *Indian Review*, a monthly magazine edited by Mr. Natesan of Madras.

I remain,
Yours obediently,
M. K. GANDHI

(The *Indian Review* was refused.—M.K.G.)

From a photostat: S.N. 8015; also *Young India*, 6-3-1924.

[1] This was published in the second instalment of Gandhiji's jail correspondence, with notes added.

68. *LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA*

YERAVDA JAIL,
December 20, 1922

THE SUPERINTENDENT
YERAVDA CENTRAL JAIL

SIR,

You were good enough to tell me that of those who had recently applied for permission to see me, Pandit Motilal Nehru and Hakim Ajmal Khan and Mr. Maganlal Gandhi were refused permission to see me.

Mr. Maganlal Gandhi is a very near relative of mine, holds my power of attorney and is in charge of my agricultural and hand-weaving and hand-spinning experiments and is in close touch with my work among the depressed classes.

Panditji and Hakimji are, besides being political co-workers, personal friends interested in my well-being.

I shall be obliged if you will kindly ascertain from the Government the reasons for the refusal to Pandit Motilal Nehru, Hakimji Ajmal Khan and Mr. Maganlal Gandhi.

I observe that under the prison regulations governing interviews with prisoners, all the three gentlemen named above appear to be eligible as visitors to their prisoner friends.

I would like, too, to know, if I may, what the Government's wishes are regarding interviews with me; whom I may and may not see and whether I may receive information from the permitted visitors on non-political topics or activities with which I am connected.

I remain,
Yours obediently,
M. K. GANDHI
No. 8677

From a photostat: S.N. 8016; also *Young India*, 6-3-1924

69. LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA

YERAVDA JAIL,
December 20, 1922

THE SUPERINTENDENT
YERAVDA CENTRAL JAIL

SIR,

You have been good enough to tell me that the Inspector-General has without reasons refused to sanction the use by me of two Gujarati monthlies, namely, *Vasant* and *Samalochak*.

In view of the orders of the Government about the use of periodicals by prisoners, the foregoing decision is a surprise to me. The Government orders, as I have understood them, are that prisoners may have periodicals which do not contain current political news. I am not very conversant with the *Samalochak*, but I am with the *Vasant*. It is the standard Gujarati literary monthly edited by Rao Bahadur Ramanbhai, well known as a social reformer, and contributed to mainly by those who are in some way or other connected with the Government. I have not known it to treat political questions as such, nor have I ever known it to contain political news. But it may be that the Inspector-General has other reasons for disallowing the periodicals or that both the *Vasant* and the *Samalochak* have now become political magazines. Will you kindly, therefore, ascertain from the Inspector-General the reasons for his decision? I may add that if the decision is not altered, it will deprive me of the opportunity of keeping myself in touch with Gujarati literature.

I remain,
Yours obediently,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 8017; also *Young India*, 6-3-1924

70. *JAIL DIARY, 1922*[1]

APRIL 21[2], FRIDAY

Up to to day, I have read the following books :[3]

1. *Master and His Teaching*
2. *Arm of God*
3. *Christianity in Practice*
4. *By an Unknown Disciple*
5. *Satyagraha aur Asahayoga*
6. The Koran
7. *The Way to Begin Life*
8. *Trips to the Moon*
9. *Indian Administration* (Thakore)
10. *The Ramayana*—Tulsidas

I have started baking chapatis since yesterday.

APRIL 22, SATURDAY

I finished reading *Natural History of Birds*.

Today the Superintendent[4] called all political prisoners to meet him.

I had a talk with Deshpande[5].

[1] In Gandhiji's own hand, in Gujarati, the Diary is for the most part a factual record of his life as an inmate of the Yeravda Central Jail during the period March 1922–January 1924. The original is a note-book, half-foolscap in size, with the dates, days, etc., written by Gandhiji in pencil or ink. It does not give all the days in a consecutive order, there being frequent omissions. The titles of books read by Gandhiji, given by him in Gujarati script, have been generally checked with information available in *Young India* and elsewhere. The original carried a list, in Gandhiji's hand, of titles of books in English and in Indian languages evidently read by him in jail, and this is furnished as an appendix to the "Jail Diary, 1923", which is given in this volume, as the last item for that year.

[2] Some of the entries in the Diary contain, besides the dates of the Gregorian calendar, the corresponding dates of the Vikram era. Only the former are reproduced here.

[3] Gandhiji was taken to the Yeravda Central Jail on March 21, 1922. During the period of his imprisonment there he read, in all, about 150 books on religion, literature, social and natural sciences. In the series, *My Jail Experiences*, which appeared in *Young India* from April 1924 to October 1924, Gandhiji offered detailed comments on some of these books.

[4] Col. Dalziel

[5] Gangadharrao Balkrishna Deshpande, journalist and Congress leader of Karnatak

APRIL 23, SUNDAY

Finished reading *The Young Crusader*.
Gave up lemons and sugar from today.

APRIL 26, WEDNESDAY

Yesterday I finished reading *A History of Scotland*—Book I.
The Rev. Lawrence has sent me *Bible View of the World*.

APRIL 29, SATURDAY

Finished reading the book sent by the Rev. Lawrence.
Glanced through a book on martyrs.[1]

MAY 1, MONDAY

Finished reading *A History of Scotland*—Book II. Today they passed on to me ten lbs. of flour in one lot.

MAY 5, FRIDAY

Finished reading Farrar's *Seekers after God*. Stopped taking oranges since yesterday.

MAY 6, SATURDAY

Finished reading *A History of Scotland*. Today received a letter from the Government saying that my letter[2] to Hakimji could not be forwarded to him.

Finished reading *Misar Kumari*.

MAY 12, FRIDAY

Finished reading *Stories from the History of Rome*. Today the Superintendent declined to give me a copy of the Government's order requiring him to keep back my letter to Hakimji. Consequently, I wrote one letter[3] to the Government and one[4] to Hakimji. I wrote to Hakimji only to inform him that, since the Government have refused to forward to him my letter uncensored, I have given up the intention of writing a quarterly letter.

MAY 15, MONDAY

Banker was today transferred to this ward. Wrote to the Superintendent, not officially but in a personal way, that I did not like his increasing again the supply of oranges to me. He should stop the supply of oranges and chapatis and the additional supply of milk to me.

[1] Presumably, *Lives of Fathers and Martyrs*, mentioned in the list reproduced in the appendix to "Jail Diary, 1923".

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Hakim Ajmal Khan", 14-4-1922.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to the Government of Bombay", 12-5-1922.

[4] *Vide* "Letter to Hakim Ajmal Khan", 12-5-1922.

MAY 16, TUESDAY

Mr. Jacob, head clerk to Mr. Griffiths[1], came to see me and talked to me on his behalf. The Superintendent declined to reduce the supply of oranges and told me, on the contrary, that he had orders to supply nine oranges to me.

> They are slaves who will not choose
> Hatred, scoffing and abuse,
> Rather than in silence shrink
> From the Truth they needs must think:
> They are slaves who dare not be
> In the right with two or three.
>
> —LOWELL
>
> (From *Tom Brown's School Days*)

MAY 17, WEDNESDAY

Finished reading *Tom Brown's Schooldays*. Some portions of it are beautiful.

> The Holy Supper is kept indeed
> In whatso we share with another's need—
> Not that which we give, but what we share,
> For the gift without the giver is bare;
> Who bestows himself with his alms feeds three,
> Himself, his hungering neighbour, and Me.
>
> —LOWELL

—from the same book as above.

MAY 20, SATURDAY

Finished reading Bacon's *The Wisdom of the Ancients*. Have given up chapatis since Wednesday. I am living, as an experiment, on four seers of milk, two ounces of raisins, four oranges and two lemons. Haji was taken to a dark cell yesterday.

MAY 28, SUNDAY

Read the history of India up to the Moghul dynasty. Went through Morris's grammar.

MAY 29, MONDAY

Finished reading *Chandrakant*, Part II, as also Patanjali's *Yogadarshan*.

Nearly four weeks have passed.

Started reading the Gujarati translation of Valmiki's *Ramayana*.

[1] Superintendent of Police

MAY 31, WEDNESDAY

Finished reading Kipling's *The Five Nations*.

JUNE 4, SUNDAY

Finished reading Edward Bellamy's *Equality*.

JUNE 6, TUESDAY

The Superintendent called and informed me that the Government has refused permission[1] for the printing of the *Balpothi*[2]. It has permitted me to send for books mentioned in the list.

JUNE 7, WEDNESDAY

Finished reading *St. Paul in Greece* (by Davis).

JUNE 9, FRIDAY

Finished reading *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*.

JUNE 14, WEDNESDAY

Finished reading *Pitt* by Lord Rosebery.

Truth is	Untruth is
gold	brass
silver	tin
light	darkness
heaven	hell
sky	the nether world
day	night
diamond	a pebble
a virtuous wife	a prostitute
celibacy	adultery
God	Satan
Ormuzd	Ahriman
Brahman	a soul in delusion
living	lifeless
virility	impotence
valour	cowardice
Rama	Ravana
deliverance	bondage
ambrosia	poison
life	death
goodness	evil
existence	non-existence

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jail Superintendent, Yeravda", 12-8-1922.
[2] The Gujarati Primer; for its English translation, *vide* "A Primer", 14-4-1922.

Truth is one	Untruth has many forms
Truth is a straight line	Untruth is a curved line
a right angle	. . .[1]
an ocean	the Sahara Desert
restraint	self-indulgence
love	hatred

JUNE 17, SATURDAY

Finished reading Kipling's *Second Jungle Book*.

JUNE 21, WEDNESDAY

Finished reading *Faust*.

JUNE 24, SATURDAY

Finished reading John Howard's life.
Received yesterday a parcel of five lbs. of raisins.

JUNE 25, SUNDAY

Finished reading Valmiki's *Ramayana*. Started reading *Shantiparva*[2], Part I.

JUNE 28, WEDNESDAY

Finished reading Jules Verne's *Dropped from the Clouds*.

JULY 1, SATURDAY

Finished reading the life of Columbus by Irving. Anasuyabehn, Kanji and Dhirajlal came to see Shankerlal. Ba, Harilal[3], Ramdas, Maganlal, Mathuradas, and Manu came to see me.

JULY 5, WEDNESDAY

Warner came yesterday and gave me a box and some books. Commenced reading Girdhar's *Ramayana* and *The Crusades*. Finished reading Wilberforce's *Five Empires*.

JULY 10, MONDAY

Finished reading *Lays of Ancient Rome*.

JULY 12, WEDNESDAY

Received another parcel of five and a half seers of raisins.

JULY 13, THURSDAY

Finished reading *The Crusades*. Started reading Gibbon's *Rome*.

[1] The original is blank here.
[2] A *Parva* is one of the eighteen books into which the *Mahabharata* is divided.
[3] Harilal Gandhi

JULY 16, SUNDAY

Finished reading *Shantiparva*, Part I. Started reading Part II.

JULY 18, TUESDAY

Finished reading First Urdu Book.

JULY 22, SATURDAY

Finished reading Girdhar's *Ramayana*. Started reading *Shrimad Bhagavat*.

JULY 23, SUNDAY

Started reading *Krishnacharitra* (by Jhaveri).

JULY 29, SATURDAY

Finished reading Krishnalal Jhaveri's *Krishnacharitra*.

AUGUST 4, FRIDAY

Finished reading Vaidya's *Krishnacharitra*.

AUGUST 7, MONDAY

Finished reading Gibbon, Vol. I. Started reading Vol. II.

AUGUST 10, THURSDAY

Finished reading the *Gita* by Tilak, *Shantiparva*–Part II, and *Bhagavat*–Part I. Started reading *Bhagavat*–Part II.

AUGUST 22, TUESDAY

Political prisoners were removed yesterday to the European ward. Today they were brought back to their original ward.

AUGUST 24, THURSDAY

Finished reading *Adiparva*.

AUGUST 27, SUNDAY

Finished reading *Bhagavat*–Part II. Started reading *Sabhaparva* on Friday. Started reading *Sarasvatichandra*.

AUGUST 28, MONDAY

Finished reading *Manusmriti*. Started reading *Ishopanishad*.

AUGUST 30, WEDNESDAY

Finished reading *Sabhaparva*. Started reading *Vanaparva*.

SEPTEMBER 1, FRIDAY

Finished reading Gibbon, Vol. II. Finished reading *Ishopanishad*.

SEPTEMBER 2, SATURDAY

Started reading Gibbon, Vol. III.

SEPTEMBER 3, SUNDAY

Finished reading *Sarasvatichandra*–Part I. Started reading Part II.

SEPTEMBER 6, WEDNESDAY

Finished reading *Sarasvatichandra*–Part II. Started reading Part III.

SEPTEMBER 9, SATURDAY

Finished reading *Sarasvatichandra*–Part III. Started reading Part IV.

SEPTEMBER 13, WEDNESDAY

I have decided to observe silence from 3 p.m. today up to 3 p.m. on Tuesday, with Major Jones's[1] consent. The following exceptions will be made :

1. When others or I suffer.
2. When friends from outside come to see me.
3. If, in the meanwhile, I am removed to the ward of my Dharwar friends.
4. If an official like Mr. Hayward[2] happens to visit us.
5. If Major Jones wishes to have a talk with me.

Bedsteads were received today for . . .

SEPTEMBER 20, WEDNESDAY

Observance of silence ended yesterday. Experienced supreme joy during the period of silence. Finished reading *Sarasvatichandra*—Part IV today. Finished reading Kabir's poems. Started reading Jacob Boehmen. Wrote a letter of apology to Shankerlal. Have again started observing silence. It will end at 3 p.m. on Tuesday.

SEPTEMBER 23, SATURDAY

Finished reading Boehmen's *Supersensual Life*.

'It is naught indeed but thine own hearing and willing that do hinder thee so that thou dost not see and hear God.' p. 14

[1] Who worked as Superintendent of Yeravda Central Jail in the place of Col. Dalziel during the period the latter acted as Inspector-General of Prisons

[2] Sir Maurice Hayward, the then Home Member of the Government of Bombay

'If thou rulest over the creatures externally only and not from the right internal ground of thy inward nature, then thy will and ruling is in a bestial kind or matter.' p. 18

'Thou art like all things and nothing is unlike thee.' p. 19

'If thou wilt be like all things, thou must forsake all things.' p. 20

'Let the hands or the head be at labour, thy heart ought nevertheless to rest in God.' p. 65

'Heaven is the turning in of the will to the love of God.' p. 83

'Hell is the turning in of the will into the wrath of God.' p. 83

—BOEHMEN, *Supersensual Life*

Started reading *Pro Christo et Ecclesia.*

SEPTEMBER 24, SUNDAY

Finished reading *Kathavalli Upanishad.*

SEPTEMBER 25, MONDAY

Finished reading *Pro Christo et Ecclesia.* Started reading *Satyartha Prakasha.* Finished reading *Vanaparva.*

SEPTEMBER 26, TUESDAY

Started reading *Viratparva* and *Galilean.*

SEPTEMBER 27, WEDNESDAY

Started reading *Jnaneshwari.*

SEPTEMBER 30, SATURDAY

Finished reading *Virataparva* and Gibbon, Vol. III.

OCTOBER 1, SUNDAY

Started Gibbon, Vol. IV, and *Udyogaparva.*

OCTOBER 3, TUESDAY

Finished reading *Galilean.*

OCTOBER 6, FRIDAY

Ba, Jamnalalji, Ramdas, Punjabhai and Kishorelal came to see me on Wednesday. Wrote a letter[1] to Jamnalalji yesterday about Ramdas. Wrote a letter[2] to the Superintendent today about Gani[3] and newspapers[4]. Started reading *Philo Christus* and Fourth[5] Urdu Book.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jamnalal Bajaj", 5-10-1922.

[2] Not available

[3] Abdul Gani, a fellow-prisoner

[4] Political prisoners were denied newspapers and magazines. Gandhiji's request was for any of these: *The Times of India Weekly, The Indian Social Reformer, The Servant of India, Modern Review, Indian Review.*

[5] This should be "Second", *vide* entry for November 27.

OCTOBER 15, SUNDAY

Finished reading *Udyogaparva.*

OCTOBER 16, MONDAY

Started reading *Bhishmaparva.*

OCTOBER 18, WEDNESDAY

Finished reading *Satyartha Prakasha.*

OCTOBER 22, SUNDAY

Finished reading *Bhishmaparva* and *Philo Christus.*

OCTOBER 23, MONDAY

Finished reading Gibbon. Started reading *Dronaparva* and *Prem Mitra.* Finished reading *Jnaneshwari.*

OCTOBER 24, TUESDAY

Finished reading *Prem Mitra.*

OCTOBER 25, WEDNESDAY

Started reading *Shad-darshan-samuchchaya* and *The Gospel and the Plough.* Started reading Nathuram Sharma's commentary on the *Gita.*

OCTOBER 28, SATURDAY

Finished reading *The Gospel and the Plough.*

NOVEMBER 6, MONDAY

Finished reading *Dronaparva.*

NOVEMBER 7, TUESDAY

Started reading *Karnaparva.* Shankerlal was taken ill yesterday; he vomited, etc.

NOVEMBER 11, SATURDAY

Finished reading *Karnaparva.*

NOVEMBER 12, SUNDAY

Started reading *Shalyaparva.*

NOVEMBER 17, FRIDAY

Finished reading *Shalyaparva.* Left off oranges from today as an experiment. Started reading *Anushasanparva.*

NOVEMBER 22, WEDNESDAY

Finished reading *Shad-darshan-samuchchaya.*

NOVEMBER 27, MONDAY

Finished reading *Urdu Reader* No. 3. Started reading *Urdu Reader* No. 4.

NOVEMBER 28, TUESDAY

Finished reading *Anushasanparva*. Started reading *Ashvamedhikaparva*.

DECEMBER 2, SATURDAY

Finished reading *Ashvamedhikaparva*. Started reading *Ashramvasik*.

DECEMBER 4, MONDAY

Finished reading the *Mahabharata*. Started reading the writings of poet Rajchandra. Had started reading the *Mahabharata* on June 25.

DECEMBER 5, TUESDAY

Had severe stomach-ache yesterday, so took castor oil today and started taking oranges. Also started taking raisins after an interval of nearly one month.

DECEMBER 6, WEDNESDAY

Commenced J. Brierly's *Ourselves and the Universe*.

DECEMBER 9, SATURDAY

To wish ill, to do ill, to speak ill or to think ill of anyone, we are equally forbidden without exception.

—TERTULLIAN.

J. BRIERLY in *Ourselves and the Universe*

Gave up raisins and oranges from Friday.

DECEMBER 15, FRIDAY

Completed J. Brierly's *Ourselves and the Universe*.

DECEMBER 16, SATURDAY

Started reading *What Christianity Means to Me* by Lyman Abbott. Ba was to come today, but did not.

DECEMBER 21

Wrote a letter[1] yesterday to the Major about refusal of permission to Maganlal and others. Handed it today to Warner.

DECEMBER 25

Finished reading *What Christianity Means to Me*. Took raisins and figs sent by Anasuyabehn.

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 8039M

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jail Superintendent, Yeravda", 20-12-1922.

71. *INTERVIEW IN JAIL*

[*January 27, 1923*][1]

. . . Mahatma Gandhi is keeping very good health. While in prison we heard that there were stories abroad of his ill-health and melancholia. He was hurt to hear about this.

He said he would feel ashamed if he suffered from melancholia.[2] He further said that a civil resister, who would feel moody if he has to go to prison, has no business to court imprisonment or do anything that would bring it on to him. He must be prepared to treat prison as his home, if he values his country's liberty above everything else. He added that if he ever fell ill, it would not be because of any lack of attention on the part of the prison authorities, but because of his own carelessness or some inherent weakness in his constitution, or because of climatic conditions. He is taking all reasonable care of his health.

Young India, 19-4-1923

72. *LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA*

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
February 4, 1923

THE SUPERINTENDENT
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON

SIR,

You were good enough to tell me yesterday that the Inspector-General had replied to my letter of the 20th December last to the effect that you had full discretion regarding interviews by relatives and friends with me in terms of the prison regulations governing such interviews.

This reply has come upon me as a surprise and is at variance with the information given me by my wife, who, together with Mrs. Vasumati Dhimatram, was permitted to see me on the 27th ultimo.

My wife told me that she had to wait for over twenty days before receiving reply to her application for interview. On hearing

[1] Kasturba Gandhi visited Gandhiji in jail on January 27, 1923.

[2] A brief report in *Young India*, 1-2-1923, has this here: " . . . he replied that no one who knew him could imagine that he would ever suffer from melancholia, and expressed surprise that such rumours could find any credence."

rumours of my illness she came to Poona in the hope of being admitted to see me. Consequently, early last week, accompanied by Mrs. Vasumati Dhimatram, Mr. Maganlal Gandhi, Radha—his daughter about fourteen years old, and Prabhudas, a lad about eighteen years old, Mr. Chhaganlal Gandhi's son, who had come in the place of his father who was ailing and who was one of the applicants, my wife applied at the prison gate for admission. You told the party that you could not admit them as you had no authority to grant permission and that you were awaiting reply from the Government to whom the original application was sent by you. On Mr. Maganlal Gandhi's pressing, you undertook to telephone to the Inspector-General who, too, it seems could not grant the proposed interview and my wife and party had to go away disappointed.

On the 27th ultimo, my wife told me you telephoned to her saying that you had heard from the Government that she and three others who were named in her original application could see me. This therefore excluded youngsters Radha and Prabhudas.

If you had the discretion retained to you, the whole of the circumstances narrated above need revision. I feel sure that I have not misunderstood my wife.

Moreover, if your discretion had been retained, Radha and Prabhudas could not have been excluded.

I shall therefore be obliged if you will enlighten me on the discrepancy between the Government reply and my wife's version, and inform me further:

(1) On what grounds Pandit Motilal Nehru, and Hakim Ajmal Khan and Mr. Maganlal Gandhi were excluded last year.

(2) Who will and who will not be allowed to see me in future.

(3) Whether, at these interviews, I may receive information on non-political matters and activities initiated and now being conducted by my various representatives.

Though I will not permit myself to believe that any humiliation was intended, I venture to think that the treatment received by them was in fact humiliating. I should not like a repetition of the unfortunate occurrence.

I remain,

Yours obediently,

From a photostat: S.N. 8018; also *Young India*, 6-3-1924

73. LETTER TO MAJOR W. JONES

February 10 [1923]

DEAR MAJOR JONES,

This is a personal letter because it embraces sentiment and travels beyond my province as a prisoner. At the same time, if your official position demands that you cannot help taking official notice of it, of course you are at liberty to do so.

Yesterday morning I heard screaming and some of the men about shouted out: "There goes flogging."[1] I wondered. A short while after, I saw four or five young men in gunny clothing being marched. One had a bare back. They were all walking very slowly and with bent backs. I observed that they were in pain. They bowed to me. I returned the bow. I concluded that they must have been flogged. During the day I saw a respectable man in irons and gunny clothing pass by. He too bowed. Contrary to my custom, I asked him who he was. He told me he was a Mulshi Peta man. I asked him whether he knew the flogged men. He said he knew them all, as they were also Mulshi Peta men.

The object in writing this is to know whether I could be permitted to see these men who are refusing to work[2]. If I find them to be acting foolishly or thoughtlessly, I might be able to persuade them to reconsider their position. Satyagraha requires a prisoner to obey all reasonable prison regulations, and certainly to do the work given. In fact, his resistance ceases once a satyagrahi is in prison. It can be revived for extraordinary reasons, e.g., studied humiliation. If these men claim to be satyagrahis, I should like to explain all this to them.

I know that a prisoner cannot ordinarily be permitted to assist or intervene in prison administration. My only ground for expecting response to my suggestion is that of common humanity. You, I am sure, will want to leave no stone unturned to avoid flogging, if it is at all possible. I have suggested a possibility in all

[1] Shankerlal Banker's detailed statement on prison treatment, which was published in *Young India*, 19-4-1923, refers to this incident.

[2] They had been assigned grinding of corn, but had considered the work unfit for political prisoners.

humility. I wish you would and could be permitted to avail yourself of my offer.[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 8019; also *Young India*, 6-3-1924

74. LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA

YERAVDA JAIL,
February 12, 1923

THE SUPERINTENDENT
YERAVDA CENTRAL JAIL

SIR,

I have just learnt that Mr. Jeramdas[2] has been awarded some punishment for having talked to some Mulshi Peta men.[3] I do not write this to complain of the punishment, but to ask for the same or greater for myself. I make this request not in a querulous but, if I may so put it, in a religious spirit. For the breach is more mine than Mr. Jeramdas's. I asked him to tell any Mulshi Peta man he could see that, if he claimed to be a satyagrahi, he should not refuse to work. Mr. Jeramdas would not reject such a request from me. I told him too to tell you all that happened if you visited him today, and I was to have told you tomorrow what happened between us tomorrow, because you do not visit me on Mondays, as it is my day of silence. I assure you that I would not misunderstand the infliction of punishment on me. I should

[1] Major Jones thanked Gandhiji, but regretted the offer could not be accepted.

[2] Jairamdas Doulatram (b. 1892); General Secretary, Indian National Congress, 1931-34; Governor of Bombay, 1947-48, of Assam, 1950-56; Union Minister for Food and Agriculture, 1948-50; member of Parliament since 1959.

[3] He had crossed over from his barrack to that of the Mulshi Peta prisoners and tried to persuade them to carry out the work assigned to them as a measure of jail discipline. On the warder reporting this to higher authorities, he was confined in his own cell for a few days, being let out for a few minutes only for his bath.

feel sorry if I escape when the one who is less guilty—if there be guilt in the act—is punished.[1]

I remain,
Yours obediently,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 8020; also *Young India*, 6-3-1924

75. LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA:

YERAVDA CENTRAL JAIL,
February 12, 1923

THE SUPERINTENDENT
YERAVDA CENTRAL JAIL

SIR,

I observe that some Mulshi Peta prisoners have been flogged, as they are said to have refused to work and to have wilfully done short task.

If these prisoners claim to be satyagrahis, they are bound to obey all prison regulations so long as they are not humiliating or unreasonable, and certainly to the best of their capacity do the tasks allotted to them. If, therefore, they have refused to work or do not work according to their physical capacity, they are committing a breach of their own canon of good conduct in addition to that of prison regulations.

I am sure that the authorities do not desire to flog them, if they can be otherwise persuaded to work, and that they would wish prisoners to yield to reason rather than to fear of punishment.

[1] While reproducing the letter in *Young India*, 6-3-1924, Gandhiji added the following note: "The Superintendent, in reply to the foregoing, came to my cell and said that he harboured no anger against Mr. Jeramdas. Whatever he (Mr. Jeramdas) did was done openly, but he was bound to take some notice of the breach of regulations. He could not punish me for instigation. I had not left the boundary of my yard to talk to the satyagrahis and therefore he could not punish me. Owing to Mr. Jeramdas's talk to the satyagrahis, an ugly situation was prevented." About this episode, Jairamdas Doulatram says: "As a result of Gandhiji's intervention through me, the Mulshi Peta prisoners responded and carried out the task imposed on them. The authorities had intended to give them the punishment of whipping in case they persisted in their refusal. . . . This would have led to other developments and, I believe, might have led to Gandhiji's intervention in a much more active manner, leading to other consequences."

I fancy that the men will listen to me. I, therefore, request that I may be permitted to meet in your presence all the Mulshi Peta men who wilfully break prison regulations, so that I may explain to them their duty as satyagrahis if they claim to be such.

I am aware that it is not usual to permit prisoners to assist or intervene in matters of prison administration. But I imagine that considerations of humanity such as in the case mentioned will be allowed to supersede those of administrative custom.[1]

I remain,
Yours obediently,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 8021; also *Young India*, 6-3-1924

76. *LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA*

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
February 23, 1923

THE SUPERINTENDENT,
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON
[SIR,]

You were kind enough to tell me today that you had heard from the Government in reply to my letter of the 4th instant,[2] and that the Government was sorry for the inconvenience that was caused to my wife and that, with reference to the other parts of my letter, the Government could not discuss with a prisoner the prison regulations in general. I appreciate the expression of sorrow about the inconvenience caused to my wife.

Regarding the other part of the Government reply, I beg to state that I am well aware of the fact that, as a prisoner, I may not discuss the prison regulations in general. If the Government will reread my letter of the 4th instant, they will discover that I have not invited a general discussion of the regulations. On the contrary, I have merely ventured to seek information on the particular application of certain regulations in so far only as they bear on my future conduct and welfare. I presume that a

[1] Gandhiji appended the following note later, while publishing the letter in *Young India*: "In reply, the Superintendent told me that whilst the Government thanked me for the offer, they could not avail themselves of it."

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Jail Superintendent, Yeravda", 4-2-1923.

prisoner is entitled to seek and receive such information. If I am to see my friends and wife in future, I ought to know whom I may or may not see, so as to avoid disappointment or even possible humiliation.

I venture to make my position clear. I have the good fortune to have numerous friends who are as dear to me as relatives. I have children being brought up under me who are like my own children. I have associates living under the same roof with me, and helping me in my various non-political activities and experiments. I could not, without doing violence to my most cherished sentiments, see my wife, if I may not from time to time also see these friends, associates and children. I see my wife not merely because she is my wife, but chiefly because she is my associate in my activities.

Nor should I have any interest in seeing those I wish to, if I may not talk to them about my non-political activities.

Again, I am naturally interested in knowing why Pandit Motilal Nehru, Hakimji Ajmal Khan and Mr. Maganlal Gandhi were excluded. I should understand their exclusion if they were guilty of ungentlemanly conduct, or if they wanted to see me for any political discussion. But if they have been excluded for any unnamable political reasons, the least I could do is to waive the pleasure of seeing my wife. I entertain ideas of honour and self-respect which I would like the Government, if they can, to understand and appreciate.

I have no desire to hold political discussion with anybody, much less to send out political messages. The Government may post anyone they wish to be present at these interviews and their representative may take shorthand notes thereon if the Government deem it necessary. But I may be excused if I wish to guard against friends and relatives being refused permission for reasons outside the prison regulations. I have now stated my position frankly and fully. This correspondence commenced on the 20th December last. I would urge the Government to let me have an early, straight and undiplomatic reply.

I remain,
Yours obediently,
M. K. GANDHI
No. 827

From a photostat: S.N. 8022; also *Young India*, 6-3-1924

77. *LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA*

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
February 23, 1923

THE SUPERINTENDENT
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON

SIR,

You have kindly informed me that in reply to my letter of the 4th ultimo, the Inspector-General says that the use of the two periodicals *Vasant* and *Samalochak* cannot be granted. I beg to state that I knew that decision before writing the letter in question. If the Inspector-General will please have the letter read to him again, he will notice that I knew the decision and he will notice further that what I have sought in my letter is the reason for the refusal. I have ventured to ask in my letter whether the use of the periodicals was refused on the ground that they contained currently political news, or whether the decision was based on any other ground. I venture to repeat my request and hope to be favoured with an early reply.

I remain,
Yours obediently,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 8023; also *Young India*, 6-3-1924

78. *LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA*

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
March 25, 1923

THE SUPERINTENDENT
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON

SIR,

You have kindly informed me that the Inspector-General has replied to my letter of the 23rd ultimo saying that the decision about the *Vasant* and the *Samalochak* was given by a competent authority and that I was to be referred to the last paragraph of the Government's letter regarding my inquiry about certain applications for interviews with me.

I beg to tender my congratulations to the I.G. for the promptness of his reply, but greatly deplore the position adopted by him. I.G.'s[1] competency to decide as to the periodicals was never questioned by me. And the paragraph of the Government's letter referred to by him does not help me in the least. It says that you may not discuss with prisoners the prison regulations in general. I have asked the I.G. to do no such thing with me. I have merely asked for the reasons of his decision. I may remind him that when he was Superintendent, and applied on my behalf for the *Modern Review*, the Government did give reasons for their refusal. I venture to suggest that the present case in no way differs from the previous one.

Moreover, the Inspector-General knows from his conversations with me that I regard these refusals to let me have the use of periodicals a punishment in addition to that awarded by the convicting judge. I feel sure that, in every case, a person is entitled to reasons for punishments inflicted on him by competent authorities.

With due respect to the Inspector-General, I venture to submit that he cannot take up the lofty attitude of indifference towards prisoners that the Government may permit itself to take. Whilst he was Superintendent, he taught me to think that as Superintendent of a prison, although he undoubtedly carried out the discipline of a prison, his appointment required him equally to protect the rights, such as they were, of prisoners. He led me to think that a Superintendent of a prison was, in fact, guardian of the prisoners under his charge. If this is true, the Inspector-General is, I take it, the super-guardian of prisoners who, therefore, expect him to press their just claims even before the Government, when it happens to overlook or disregard them. A prisoner also expects him not to evade his just inquiries, but to satisfy him in every possible and reasonable way.

I am sorry for carrying on this correspondence. But, rightly or wrongly, I believe that even as a prisoner I have certain rights, for example, the right to have pure air, water, food and clothing. Similarly, I have the right to have such mental nourishment given to me as I am used to. I ask for no favours, and if the Inspector-General thinks that any single thing or convenience has been given to me as a favour, let it be withdrawn. But this matter of receiving periodicals I consider as important a right as that of receiving suitable food. I do, therefore, respectfully ask him not to treat my application for reasons for his decision with the in-

[1] *Young India* has "Government's".

difference that his letters have unfortunately hitherto betrayed.[1]

I remain,
Yours obediently,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 8024; also *Young India*, 6-3-1924

79. LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
April 16, 1923

THE SUPERINTENDENT
YERAVDA C.P.

SIR,

As my youngest son[2] has come to see me today, I should like if possible to see the Government reply to my letter of the 23rd February last regarding the regulation of interviews with me. The reply will enable me to find out whether consistently with my said letter I should see my son or not, as you know today is my silent day. The silence breaks at 2 p.m. today.[3]

I remain,
Yours obediently,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 8025; also *Young India*, 6-3-1924

80. LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA

April 16, 1923

THE SUPERINTENDENT
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON

SIR,

Over six months ago there was received for me a book called *Life and Teachings of Buddha*. About the end of last January, my wife brought for me a religious magazine which was handed at

[1] The letter was published with the following note by Gandhiji: "The Inspector-General, Col. Dalziel, at last condescended and replied that the decision was arrived at by higher authority."

[2] Devdas Gandhi

[3] For Gandhiji's comments, in connection with this letter, on Government's policy regarding interviews, *vide* "Note on Correspondence", 6-3-1924.

your office. For the past four months, a Hindi fortnightly containing Hindi and Tamil and Telugu lessons has been received and four numbers have been handed to me.

A Hindi monthly known as *Saraswati* has been sanctioned by the Government, but beyond the first three numbers, after my admission here, that magazine has not been given to me. I asked my wife during her last visit to let me have some books. This parcel is now overdue.

Will you please let me know:

(a) What has happened to the *Life and Teachings of Buddha.*

(b) What has become of the religious magazine brought by my wife.

(c) Whether the remaining issues of the Hindi, Tamil, Telugu fortnightly have been received and, if so, whether I may have them.

(d) Whether the *Saraswati* has been received and, if not, whether a letter may be written to the Manager, Satyagraha Ashram, Sabarmati, telling him the remaining issues of the magazine, since last June, have not been received and asking him to send them.

(e) Whether the expected parcel from my wife has been received.

(f) Whether any other books or periodicals have been received and not given to me.

I am anxious not to lose any of the books or magazines that may be received for me. Therefore, even when any are not given to me, I should like to have the names of such prohibited books or magazines and be assured that they are preserved at your office on my behalf.

I remain,

From a photostat: S.N. 8026

81. LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA

April 26, 1923

THE SUPERINTENDENT
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON

SIR,

Last Monday week, my youngest son Devdas Gandhi who was permitted to see me told me that he had applied for permission on behalf of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Mr. Mahadeo Desai and himself, but he alone received the permission to see me. You have

kindly informed me of the reply of the Government to my letter to you of 23rd February last. Putting the two together, I am in a position to understand somewhat the Government attitude regarding those who may wish to see me. In order to avoid disappointment, as much as possible, I told my son that, for a while at any rate, I shall try to apply for the necessary permission instead of friends having to apply from outside. Consistently, therefore, with the said reply of the Government, I beg to apply for permission to any five of the following who may be free to see me together with Lakshmi Dudabhai Gandhi, a young suppressed-classes girl, seven years old, who has been brought up and adopted by me. The other names are:

(1) Mr. Chhaganlal Gandhi, a cousin of mine who was to have seen me last January but could not owing to illness.

(2) Mr. Jamnadas Gandhi No. (1)'s brother.

(3) Mr. Narandas Gandhi, No. (1)'s brother.

(3A) Ramdas Gandhi, my son.

(4) Radha Maganlal Gandhi, No. (1)'s brother's daughter, a girl 14 years old.

(4A) Rukhi M. Gandhi, No. (4)'s younger sister.

(5) Moti Lakshmidas, a girl about 15 years old.

(6) Laxmi Lakshmidas, No. [5's sister]—a girl 13 years old.

(7) Amina Bawazeer, a girl 15 years old.

(8) Krishnadas Chhaganlal Gandhi, No. (1)'s son, about 12 years old.

(9) Mrs. Gandhi.

All these are living with me at the Satyagraha Ashram. Those who are relatives and those, Nos. 5, 6 and 7, who are not.

I am giving more than five names in order to insure the coming of five along with Laxmi. I respectfully ask for an early reply as I am anxious to meet Mr. Chhaganlal Gandhi, his wife and the girl Moti who are ailing for some time.

I remain,
Yours obediently,

From a photostat: S.N. 8027

82. LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
May 1, 1923

THE SUPERINTENDENT
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON

SIR,

You have kindly shown me the regulation classifying certain simple-imprisonment prisoners in a special division and told me that I am so classified. In my opinion there are hard-labour prisoners like Messrs Kaujalgi, Jeramdas and Bhansali[1], who are no more criminals than I am, and who have enjoyed outside a status probably superior to mine, and who certainly have been used to a softer life than I have for years. Whilst, therefore, such prisoners remain outside the special classification, much as I should like to avail myself of some of the regulations above-named, I am unable so to avail myself, and I should be glad if my name is removed from the special division.

I remain,
Yours,
M. K. GANDHI
No. 827

From a photostat: S.N. 8028; also *Young India*, 6-3-1924

83. LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
June 28, 1923

THE SUPERINTENDENT
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON

SIR,

I heard this morning that six Mulshi Peta prisoners were flogged today for short task. A few days ago, I heard that one such prisoner was also flogged for the same 'offence'. Today's

[1] Jaikrishna Bhansali; was printer of *Young India* after Gandhiji's arrest in March 1922. He was also arrested soon after and lodged in Yeravda Jail.

news has considerably agitated me and seems almost to compel some action on my part. But I want to take no hasty step. And I owe it to you that I should, before doing anything whatsoever, seek accurate information from you regarding the punishment, which I do hereby.

I am aware that as a prisoner I have no right to ask you for such information, but I venture to do so as a man and in my capacity as a public worker.

I remain,
Yours obediently,
M. K. GANDHI
No. 827

From a photostat: S.N. 8029; also *Young India*, 6-3-1924

84. *LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA*

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
June 29, 1923

THE SUPERINTENDENT
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON

SIR,

With reference to my letter of yesterday regarding the flogging of certain Mulshi Peta prisoners, I beg to thank you and the Inspector-General for giving me full information about the cause of the punishment.

You will recall that, when some months ago similar punishment was awarded to some other Mulshi Peta prisoners, I requested the Government to let me interview all such prisoners with a view to inducing them to conform to jail discipline. The Government were good enough to thank me for the offer, but declined to accept it. I did not press my request further, if only for the reason that I had hoped that occasion would not again arise for flogging such prisoners. But the hope has not been fulfilled and flogging has been resorted to more than once since the one referred to by me.

I believe that, if I could see the prisoners, I could induce them to look at their imprisonment in the proper light and not to shirk work or resort to insubordination, as they are said to have done. To enable me to do so from time to time, I request that I may be accommodated with them. If this cannot be done,

I request permission to see the prisoners as often as the occasion may require.

I am aware that as a prisoner I may not ask or receive such permission, but I respectfully ask it as a human being to serve a humane purpose. The Government, I am sure, cannot wish to see the punishment of flogging inflicted if it can be at all avoided on any prisoner, much less on one who rightly or wrongly regards himself as imprisoned for conscience' sake. They will appreciate my position when I state that these floggings are most distressing to me, specially as I believe that they can be avoided if I am permitted to live with the prisoners.

I venture to trust that the Government will reciprocate the spirit of my letter and not put me, by rejecting my offer of service, in the most awkward position of being compelled to take action, which may, without any such wish on my part, prove embarrassing to them.[1] It is not my purpose whilst undergoing imprisonment to embarrass the Government by any conduct that I can possibly avoid.

In view of the fact that some of the prisoners are hunger-striking in connection with the matter, I request as early a reply as possible.

I remain,
Yours obediently,
M. K. GANDHI
No. 827

From a photostat: S.N. 8030; also *Young India*, 6-3-1924

85. *LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA*

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
July 9, 1923

THE SUPERINTENDENT
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON

SIR,

You will recall the fact that I wrote to you on the 29th ultimo on the recent flogging of certain Mulshi Peta prisoners. By way of protest against this punishment some of the Mulshi Peta prisoners have been fasting ever since. Of these a few have weakened and given up the fast.

[1] Gandhiji was contemplating a fast; *vide* the following item.

In view of the fast, if not for my request, I had expected that the Government would send an early reply to the proposal contained in my letter. It is now ten days and there is no reply as yet received from the Government.

As time passes, the agitation of my soul increases. I have attempted again and again to regard myself as a mere prisoner and therefore not to think about what happens to the other prisoners. But I must confess that I have failed. I cannot forget that I am a human being, or public worker and reformer. Rightly or wrongly I feel that, if I could but meet the hunger-strikers, their fast, if it is unreasonable, as you say and I believe it is, will end. If it was my brother who was fasting in this prison instead of a stranger, I wonder if I would be expected to look upon his fast with the indifference which prisoners are supposed to adopt regarding their fellows. I feel about these fasting prisoners exactly as I would about a blood brother. Though the fact is irrelevant, I may mention that two of these prisoners are well known to me and have considerable status in society in their respective provinces.

The situation has become well-nigh intolerable for me. Unless, therefore, in the meantime some satisfactory reply to my offer is received by the end of the day, purely as a solace for my own soul, and for no other reason, I propose to fast from tomorrow (not denying myself water or salt) till a satisfactory solution is reached, i.e., till the hunger-strike ends and the situation sought to be covered by my proposal contained in my letter of the 29th ultimo is fully met.

I know that my decision will cause you pain. You have been so extraordinarily kind and attentive to me. I know, too, that it is likely to cause some embarrassment to the Government. But I hope both you and the Government will appreciate my moral difficulty.

The Government can at any moment end the unfortunate situation by accepting my offer.

I shall fast not because these Mulshi Peta prisoners are fasting, but because I am debarred from helping, though I feel confident that I can help, to end the prevailing hunger-strike and prevent a recurrence of the events that have ended in the hunger-strike.

I have no desire to interfere with the prison administration. But where a question of humanity arises, that of administrative prestige, in my humble opinion, recedes into the background. And any civilized Government will, I imagine, gladly

accept the willing co-operation of even a prisoner if thereby the interests of humanity are served.

I remain,
Yours obediently,

From a photostat: S.N. 8031

86. *LETTER TO F. C. GRIFFITHS*

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
July 17, 1923

DEAR MR. GRIFFITHS,

The Superintendent told me yesterday your reply to my message.

Here then is my letter.

You told me at the last interview last week that, whilst His Excellency was willing to permit me to see the Mulshi Peta satyagrahi hunger-strikers and to issue suitable instructions for preventing the flogging of satyagrahi prisoners except in the case of assaults upon officials, and then, too, after previous sanction by the Government, he did not wish even to seem to consider my proposals under threat of my fasting which my letter of the 9th instant appeared to His Excellency to convey. I repeat here what I told you in the course of our conversation on Thursday last. Nothing was farther from my wish than to issue any threat to the Government. The contemplated fast, as already stated in my said letter, was for me a purely ethical step. As a prisoner, I was bound to inform the Superintendent of my wish to fast in the event of my failing to obtain an interview with the hunger-strikers. My fast, I knew, was likely to embarrass the Government which had custody of my body, but I felt that I could not, without doing violence to my inner being, refrain from a clear duty because it might, without any such desire on my part, embarrass the Government if it would not take the course that humanity plainly dictated. To emphasize the meaning I put upon my said letter and the whole of my action since and before in connection with the hunger-strike, I told you I was prepared to regard my letter as withdrawn, without in any way admitting that I had intended to issue any threat to the Government, and to believe His Excellency's assurance that he would have granted my request on merits even if he had not known that I contemplated fasting. And I was thankful that you were

authorized to accept my explanation of my letter and to let me see the two of the hunger-strikers whose names I mentioned to you.

I hope that the instructions regarding flogging have already been issued.

If there is any omission or error, you will please not hesitate to tell me.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 8032

87. *LETTER TO F. C. GRIFFITHS*

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
July 24, 1923

DEAR MR. G[RIFFITHS],

I was astonished to learn from you, when you saw me on the 12th inst., that H.E. the Governor had read a threat into my letter of the 9th inst. I would now repeat what I told you then, namely, that no threat of any kind whatsoever was intended to be conveyed to the Government in that letter and that, if in spite of that assurance, H.E. still read a threat into that letter, it might be regarded as entirely cancelled or withdrawn.

It is, indeed, all the more pleasing to me to be able to feel that H.E. could accede to my requests on their merits. Will you please, therefore, convey my thanks to H.E. for the orders which, as you now tell me, were issued almost immediately after our conversation regarding further floggings, which orders, I am glad to see, really cover a wider ground than I had intended.[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. G.

F. C. GRIFFITHS, C.S.K., O.B.E.

From a photostat of a draft: S.N. 8033

[1] A note at the end of the above draft says that, on July 25, this paragraph was replaced by the following sentence: "I need hardly add that I am sorry that H.E. should have read any threat in my letter."

88. *LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA*

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
August 14, 1923

THE SUPERINTENDENT
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON

SIR,

With reference to the conversation yesterday between His Excellency[1] and myself, I would like to submit the following:

I must confess that behind the special division regulations I have always read not a sincere recognition of the necessity of some such provision, but a reluctant and, therefore, a mere paper concession to some public pressure. But for H.E.'s kind invitation to say anything I might have in my mind, I would not have taken advantage of yesterday's visit of kindly inquiry to raise or discuss any contentious matter. But when I mentioned the question of the special division, I was totally unprepared for what H.E. said. I want, if possible, to disabuse my mind of the suspicion I have of the Government's motive, the more so after knowing that H.E. is himself responsible for drawing up the regulations.

Notwithstanding the confidence with which H.E. spoke yesterday, I feel that there is no legal bar to the inclusion of selected rigorous-imprisonment prisoners in the special division. If there is a statutory bar, I should like to see the provision.

I would also like respectfully to point out that H.E. was sorely labouring under some mistake that sentences could be altered only by courts of law. Even during my short experience of this jail, I have noticed so many prisoners having been prematurely discharged under administrative orders. The point I raised was merely that of reducing rigorous imprisonment to simple, if there was any technical and legal difficulty about specially classifying rigorous-imprisonment prisoners as such.

In referring to these points, I do not want to be understood to complain of the rigorous imprisonment of any of the prisoners or to desire the inclusion of any rigorous-imprisonment prisoners for their own sakes in the special division.

What, however, I do respectfully desire is (1) to be enlightened on the points I have raised so as to rid myself of the suspicion I have referred to and (2) either, logically, the inclusion in the

[1] The Governor, Sir George Lloyd visited Yeravda Prison on August 13.

special division of also the rigorous-imprisonment prisoners who are brought up to habits of life, for meeting which the special division regulations have been framed, or to have my name and the names of my two colleagues removed from the special division.

I trust that H.E. will appreciate our anxiety not to be favoured to the exclusion of those whom we consider to be just as much entitled to extra conveniences as ourselves. In this connection, I would request H.E. to send for and read my letter[1] of 1st May last on the same subject.

I need hardly say that this letter is in no way written in my capacity as a prisoner, but is in continuation of the friendly, kindly conversation in which His Excellency was pleased to engage me yesterday.

I am,
Yours faithfully,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 8034

89. LETTER TO GOVERNOR OF BOMBAY

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
August 15, 1923[2]

TO
H. E. THE GOVERNOR OF BOMBAY

SIR,

Your Excellency will, I trust, forgive me for referring to our conversation of Monday last. The more I think of what you said about the powers of the Government about framing regulations, and reducing sentences, the more I feel that you are mistaken. I must confess that behind the special division regulations, I have always read not a sincere recognition of the necessity of some such provision, but a reluctant and, therefore, a mere paper concession to some public pressure. But if you are right in thinking that the law gives you no authority to specially classify rigorous-imprisonment prisoners or to reduce sentences, I must revise my view of the Government action and rid myself of the suspicion about its motives. I should like to be able to do so all the more as you tell me you have personally framed the regulations in question. I have always considered you to be the last person to do things weakly or to appear to conciliate public sentiment when

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jail Superintendent, Yeravda", 1-5-1923.
[2] *Young India* has "15th July 1923", which is a slip.

you did not wish to. I would be glad, therefore, to find that you excluded rigorous-imprisonment prisoners from the benefit of the regulations only because the law rendered you helpless.

But if your law officers advise you that the law does not prevent you, as you imagine it does, I hope you will do one of the two things :

(1) Either remove me and my colleagues mentioned to you by me from the special division or (2) logically include in the special division those rigorous-imprisonment prisoners who are accustomed to the same mode of life as we are.

I would ask Your Excellency to send for and read my letter of 1st May last addressed to the Superintendent together with this.[1]

I remain,
Your faithful servant,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 8035; also *Young India*, 6-3-1924

90. *LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA*

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
September 6, 1923

THE SUPERINTENDENT
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON

SIR,

With reference to the names sent to the Government of certain visitors intending to see me,[2] you have today informed me that the Government have now decided to restrict the number of visitors to be permitted to see me to two, and that of the names sent, only Messrs Narandas and Devdas Gandhi may be permitted to see me for this quarter's interview.

As the Government have hitherto permitted me to receive five visitors, I must confess that the present decision has come upon me as a surprise. But I welcome the decision inasmuch as they have refused to grant similar permission to my colleague Mr. Yagnik who is kept in the same block with me. Had it not appeared graceless, I would myself have waived the facility which I then saw was exclusively allowed to me.

The case, however, of restricting the permission only to Messrs Narandas and Devdas Gandhi stands on a different footing. If

[1] For Gandhiji's observations made later, while releasing the correspondence in *Young India*, *vide* "Comment on Prison Regulations", 6-3-1924.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Jail Superintendent, Yeravda", 26-4-1923.

it means that henceforth I am not to see any but such blood relations only as may be allowed, I must deny myself the usual privilege of receiving visitors twice every quarter. I had thought the question of the qualifications of persons who were to be permitted to see me was decided once for all. I have no desire to weary the Government by reiterating the argument contained in the previous correspondence on this subject. I can only state that the three friends whose names have been sent to the Government fall under the category of those who have been permitted to see me since the correspondence referred to by me. And if I may not see these friends, whom I regard in the same light as my blood relations, I must simply not receive any visitors at all.

I observe that the Government have taken over a fortnight to give the decision you have conveyed to me. May I ask now for an early decision on this letter, so as to avoid unnecessary suspense both to those who are eager to see me and to myself.

I remain,
Yours faithfully,
M. K. GANDHI
No. 827

From photostat: S.N. 8036; also *Young India*, 6-3-1924

91. MESSAGE TO MAHOMED ALI[1]

[YERAVDA PRISON,
September 10, 1923]

I can send you no message because I am in prison. I have always disapproved of people sending messages from prison. But

[1] This message seems to have been given to Devdas Gandhi personally when he interviewed Gandhiji in Yeravda Prison, and was conveyed by him to Mahadev Desai, who later quoted it in his article, "Delhi Congress", in *Young India*, 4-10-1923. On September 13, according to Mahadev Desai, Mahomed Ali "asked Devdas if Bapu had anything to say to him, and the 'wireless' message he jocularly referred to in his speech was then given to him." This is however worded differently from the message which Mahomed Ali quoted in his speech, in support of the resolution advocating Council-entry, at the special Congress session in Bombay on September 12, over which he presided. According to a report in *The Hindu*, 17-9-1923, the gist of the message from Gandhiji, which Mahomed Ali interpreted to mean as permitting a change in the non-co-operation programme of the Congress, was as follows: "I do not want you to stick to my programme. I am for the entire programme. But, if looking at the state of the country, you think that one or two items of the boycott programme should be discarded or modified or added to, then in the

I may say that I am deeply touched by your loyalty to me. I would, however, ask you not to allow your loyalty to me to weigh with you so much as your loyalty to the country. My views are very well known. I expressed them before I went to jail, and there has been no change in them since. I may assure you that if you choose to differ from me, it will not affect by one jot the sweetness of relations between you and me.

Young India, 4-10-1923

92. *LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA*

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
November 12, 1923

TO
THE SUPERINTENDENT
YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON

SIR,

At the time you told my companion, Mr. Abdul Gani, that the prison rules did not permit you to let him have diet that cost more than the authorized scale, I informed you that your predecessor had allowed all my companions and me to regulate our diet. I further submitted to you that it was awkward for me to enjoy a facility Mr. Abdul Gani could not enjoy and that, therefore, my diet too should be so reduced as to be brought in harmony with the regulations, and the scale allowed to Mr. Abdul Gani. You were good enough to suggest that, for the time being, I should continue the present rations and that I might discuss the matter with the Inspector-General, who would shortly visit the prison. I have waited now for over ten days. I feel that if I am to keep the peace of mind, I should wait no longer and, in any case, I have nothing to discuss with the Inspector-General. I have no complaint whatsoever to make against your decision regarding Mr. Abdul Gani. I recognize that you are powerless even if you were minded to help my companion. Nor is it my intention to seek any revision of the prison regulations regarding diet. All I am desirous of doing

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name of love of country, I command you to give up those parts of my programme or alter them accordingly." There is, however, no evidence that this message was actually sent by Gandhiji. *Vide* Mahadev Desai's article "Delhi Congress", *Young India*, 4-10-1923, C. Rajagopalachari's "Notes", *Young India*, 20-9-1923, Pandit Sunderlal's "Our Immediate Duty", *Young India*, 1-11-1923, and finally, V. S. Srinivasa Sastri's statement to the Press reproduced in *Young India*, 17-1-1924.

is to avoid my favoured treatment. You have kindly suggested that my diet scale might have been considered by your predecessor a medical necessity. I know, however, as a matter of fact, that such should not be the case, for my diet has been the same more or less from the time of my admission to this jail; and what is more to the point, my companions and I have, as has been already mentioned, been hitherto permitted to regulate our diet without regard to cost.

I propose, therefore, to discontinue oranges and raisins as from Wednesday next. My diet will still exceed the authorized rate. I am not sure that I need 4 lbs. of goat's milk, but unless you will kindly assist me to further change my diet so as to reduce the cost to the authorized rate, I shall reluctantly continue to take the 4 lbs. of milk and sour limes not exceeding two.

I need hardly assure you that I contemplate the reduction in no querulous spirit. I fully sympathize with your decision regarding Mr. Abdul Gani. I propose to make the change purely for my inner peace, and in this I ask for your sympathy and approval.

I remain,
Yours obediently,
M. K. GANDHI
No. 827

From a photostat: S.N. 8038; also *Young India*, 6-3-1924

93. *LETTER TO INDULAL YAGNIK*

November 12, 1923

BHAISHRI INDULAL,

Read this[1] carefully and show it to Abdul Gani. Make any suggestions you would like regarding language, etc. I see no alternative but to give up oranges and raisins. I am not at all convinced that it is necessary to take them. Even if I were to lose a few pounds in weight, that would be nothing compared to the satisfaction I would derive. I see that if I am to be true to my nature, I can do nothing else. I have waited long for J.

MOHANDAS

From a handwritten draft of the Gujarati: S.N. 8038

[1] Presumably, this was the draft of the preceding item.

94. *JAIL DIARY*, 1923

JANUARY 3, WEDNESDAY

Finished reading *Steps to Christianity* yesterday. Started reading Trine's *My Philosophy and Religion*. Today the Major[1] gave me a copy of the notification that the Inner Temple had removed my name from its Roll.

JANUARY 7, SUNDAY

Finished reading *My Philosophy and Religion* yesterday. Started reading Rabindranath's *Sadhana* and *Upanishad*[*-Prakash*].

JANUARY 14, SUNDAY

Finished reading *Sadhana* yesterday.

FEBRUARY 4, SUNDAY

Finished reading Rajchandra's writings and *Ishopanishad* with a commentary. Reading *Kena*[2]. Completed the second reading of Urdu Book III. Finished reading *Auto-suggestion*. Ba came and saw me on January 27. Released Shankerlal from his vow on the 28th.

FEBRUARY 5, MONDAY

Finished reading *Helps to Bible Study*. Started reading Max Muller's translation of the *Upanishads* as also Wells's History.

FEBRUARY 22, THURSDAY

Finished reading Max Mueller's translation of the *Upanishads* as also *Upanishad-Prakash*, Part III. Reading Part IV and Wells's History.

FEBRUARY 25, SUNDAY

Finished reading the *Upanishad*[*-Prakash*], Part IV. Started reading Part V, *Kathavalli Upanishad*.

MARCH 2, FRIDAY

Finished reading Wells's History, Part II, on February 28. Started reading the Bible yesterday. Finished reading the leaflet on the worship of Vishnu. Started reading Wells's History, Part I.

[1] Major Whitworth Jones; for the notification, *vide* Appendix IV.

[2] *Kena Upanishad*

MARCH 11, SUNDAY

Applied, on Wednesday, caustic soda to the eye for conjunctivitis.

Finished reading the *Upanishad*[-*Prakash*], Part V, on Thursday. Started reading Part VI. I could not spin on that day. Completed Urdu Book IV. Started reading Book V.

MARCH 16, FRIDAY

Finished reading Wells's History, Part I, yesterday. Today glanced through *Science of Peace* by Bhagwandas.

MARCH 19, MONDAY

Finished reading Kipling's *Barrack-room Ballads*. Reading Geddes's *Evolution of Cities*. Finished reading the pamphlet on Vedic religion.

MARCH 21, WEDNESDAY

Yesterday finished reading Geddes' *Evolution of Cities*. Today started reading a biography of Ramanuja. Received ten seers of raisins.

MARCH 22, THURSDAY

Finished reading the biography of Ramanujacharya. Started reading Sikh history.

MARCH 26, MONDAY

Started reading Mirza's *Ethics of Islam* yesterday.

MARCH 31, SATURDAY

Finished reading Sikh history and Mirza's *Ethics of Islam* yesterday and started reading Benjamin Kidd's *Social Evolution*. Started reading Buhler's translation of *Manusmriti* today.

APRIL 4, WEDNESDAY

Finished reading Kidd's *Social Evolution* yesterday. Finished reading Buhler's preface to *Manusmriti* today. Started reading *Rise of the Sikh Power* by Gokulchand.

APRIL 9, MONDAY

Yesterday finished reading Gokulchand's *Rise of the Sikh Power* as also *Kabir's Songs* by the Poet[1]. Started reading *Our Hellenic Heritage* by James today. Started reading Dadachandji's *Avesta* and Purani's translation of Aurobindo's[2] *Gitanishkarsha*.

[1] Rabindranath Tagore

[2] Aurobindo Ghosh (1872-1950); mystic, poet and philosopher; since 1910 lived at Pondicherry where he established an Ashram.

APRIL 17, TUESDAY

Finished reading James's *Our Hellenic Heritage*. Devdas came and saw me yesterday. Shankerlal was released today.

APRIL 19, THURSDAY

Sufishah Mullah Shah, when he was advised to flee from the wrath of Shah Jehan, is reported to have said:

> I am not an impostor that I should seek safety in flight. I am an utterer of truth. Death and life are to me alike. Let my blood in another life also redden the impaling stake. I am living and eternal; death recoils from me, for my knowledge has vanquished death. The sphere where all colours are effaced has become my abode.

Mansuri Hallaj said:

> To cut off the hands of a fettered man is easy, but to sever the links that bind me to the Divinity would be a task indeed.
>
> —CLAUDE FIELD in *Mystics and Saints of Islam*

Received today five seers of raisins.

APRIL 26, THURSDAY

Finished reading *Upanishad-Prakash*, Parts VII-X (*Kathopanishad*). Today started reading Part XI commencing with *Prashnopanishad*. Completed on Saturday the second reading of Urdu Reader No. I. Severe pain in stomach on Saturday. Subsided on Monday. The Major looked after me very well. I suffered very much. On Saturday, could continue work and studies according to schedule, despite the pain. They remained suspended from Sunday to Tuesday. Did not observe silence on account of pain. I believe the pain was due to my taking milk and bread as usual at 7 a.m. before the castor oil taken by me early on Saturday morning could act. Once before I had done precisely this. It had done no harm then, but this time it did. I draw two conclusions from this. First, the disease must be digging itself in slowly. Second, this body of mine will not stand the experiment of taking food before the purgative has had its effect. This result is both welcome and painful. God has been testing me on all sides—He does not permit me to see what He has been recording in His book. His wisdom is boundless.

APRIL 28, SATURDAY

Yesterday I finished reading Dadachandji's *Avesta* and started reading Spencer's *Elements of Sociology*. Today I started reading *History of Sikhism* by Macauliff.

MAY 9, WEDNESDAY

Col. Maddock[1] examined me last Saturday and informed me that most probably I was suffering from incipient dysentery. The Major started giving me injection of emetine since Sunday. It is about a week since Manzar Ali arrived. News was received today that Indulal also would be coming here. The Major delivered Andrews's letter to me today. Finished reading *Gitanishkarsha* yesterday.

MAY 16, WEDNESDAY

Indulal came yesterday. Col. Maddock examined me once again. Finished reading Herbert Spencer's *Elements of Sociology* today. Also glanced through Shivram Pherwani's *Social Efficiency.*

MAY 19, SATURDAY

I was taken to the European ward yesterday. Ba, Radha, Mani, Laxmi (Junior) and Jamnadas saw me yesterday. Yesterday I finished reading Wadia's *Message of Mahomed* and started reading *Message of Christ.* Finished reading *Prashnopanishad.*

MAY 20, SUNDAY

Started reading *Mandukopanishad.*

MAY 21, MONDAY

Finished reading Hasan's *Saints of Islam.* Started reading Moulton's *Early Zoroastrianism.*

MAY 27, SUNDAY

Finished reading Kaka's *Himalayno Pravas* and *History of Sikhism,* Part III. Commenced reading Part IV and also Chandrashankar's *Sitaharan.* Read Rolf Evelyn's *Bars and Shadows.*

MAY 31, THURSDAY

On Tuesday, took up again the spinning-wheel which had been abandoned for thirteen days. Finished reading Chandrashanker's *Sitaharan* yesterday. Today finished reading Moulton's *Early Zoroastrianism.*

JUNE 1, FRIDAY

Finished reading Kishorelal's book, *Buddha and Mahavira,* as also *History of Sikhism,* Part V.

JUNE 3, SUNDAY

Finished reading Kishorelal's *Rama and Krishna,* and also *History of Sikhism,* Part VI.

[1] Surgeon-General at Sassoon Hospital, Poona, who was to operate upon Gandhiji for appendicitis on January 12, 1924.

JUNE 6, WEDNESDAY

Finished reading the story of Aurobindo's imprisonment and *Mandukopanishad*.

JUNE 16, SATURDAY

Finished reading *Man and Superman* yesterday. Finished reading *Bhagyano Varas* today. Started reading English translation of *Markandeya Purana*.

JUNE 30, SATURDAY

At the beginning of this week, finished reading *Poorva Rang* by Kaka and Narahari and started reading the lectures given in the Puratatvamandir. Yesterday finished reading a book on an episode in the life of the Prophet in Urdu and started reading the account of the companions of the Prophet [*Usva-e-Sahaba*].

There was a discussion yesterday with Dalziel and the Major about the flogging of the Mulshi Peta prisoners.

JULY 2, MONDAY

Yesterday finished reading *Markandeya Purana* and started reading Chapters XV and XVI of *Mandukyopanishad* and Chapter XVII of Gaudapadacharya's *Karika*.

Started reading today Buckle's *History of Civilization*, Part I.

JULY 7, SATURDAY

Finished reading the lecture series[1] given at the Puratatvamandir. Started reading *Jaya-jayant*. Suffered great pain on Monday night. The fault was entirely mine. I ate more than I should have of the figs sent by Anasuyabehn. Boundless indeed is God's kindness. What else can be more conducive to welfare than immediate punishment for a sin?

JULY 10, TUESDAY

Yesterday finished reading the lecture series given at the Puratatvamandir and started reading Rabindranath's book on ancient literature.

Wrote a letter yesterday[2] to the Superintendent about my commencing a fast from today. He, therefore, came and appealed to me to postpone the fast. He again called on me this morning and asked me to postpone it for 48 hours for his sake. I have agreed to do so. Mr. Griffiths came today at 2 p.m. and left after talking to me for two hours.

[1] The following entry says that this was done on July 9.

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Jail Superintendent, Yeravda", 9-7-1923.

JULY 12, THURSDAY

Yesterday again Griffiths came with a message from the Governor. Finished reading the book on ancient literature yesterday. Started reading *Yugadharma*. I met Dastane and Dev[1] in the presence of the Superintendent and Mr. Griffiths. After discussing the moral issues involved, they announced their decision to give up their fast.

JULY 13, FRIDAY

Chhaganlal, Kashi[2] and others were to come to see me but did not.

JULY 22, SUNDAY

Ba, Chhaganlal, Amina, Ramdas and Manu saw me last Monday. Finished reading, during the week, the autobiography of Countess Tolstoy and Buckle's *History*, Part I. Reading Part II and *Kalapani-ni-katha*. Wrote a letter[3] to Mr. Griffiths about Dastane and others on Tuesday.

JULY 30, MONDAY

Finished reading *Kalapani-ni-katha* last week. Finished reading *Sampattishastra*, Part I. Reading Part II. Finished reading *Juno Karar*[4] yesterday. Started reading *Navo Karar*[5] today.

AUGUST 8, WEDNESDAY

Finished reading Buckle's *History*, Part II, and *Gitagovind*.

AUGUST 12, SUNDAY

Finished reading the last part of the *Upanishad*[*-Prakash*], covering *Aitareya Brahmana* and *Taittiriya Brahmana*. Started reading *Chhandogya Upanishad*. On Thursday, started reading Prof. James's *Varieties of Religious Experience*. Finished reading *Sampattishastra*.

AUGUST 15, WEDNESDAY

The Governor paid a visit on Monday. Wrote a letter[6] today about the special division. Finished reading [*Usva-e-*]*Sahaba* today. Reading *Stories from the History of Rome*.

AUGUST 19, SUNDAY

Finished reading Buckle's *History*, Part III. Started reading Hopkins' *Origin and Evolution of Religion*.

[1] Two leaders of Mulshi Peta satyagrahi-prisoners who had been on fast since June 30, in protest against the flogging of the satyagrahis.

[2] Wife of Chhaganlal Gandhi

[3] *Vide* "Letter to F. C. Griffiths", 17-7-1923.

[4]&[5] Gujarati translations of the Old Testament and the New Testament

[6] *Vide* "Letter to Governor of Bombay", 15-8-1923.

AUGUST 23, THURSDAY

Finished reading Hopkins' book. Started reading Lecky's *European Morals.*

AUGUST 26, SUNDAY

Finished reading James's *Varieties of Religious Experience.* Four days ago finished reading Vinoba's *Maharashtra-Dharma,* Part I. Part II is about to be finished.

The Superintendent said yesterday that those who took raw milk did not need fruits and hence he refused to give fruits to Manzar Ali. Even for me, he said, they were not really necessary; so I stopped asking for oranges, lemons, etc. Today ate bananas from Manzar Ali's ration. Took milk raw.

AUGUST 28, TUESDAY

Today finished writing *Gitakosh*[1]. Started reading Holmes' *Freedom and Growth* yesterday.

Started living exclusively on raw milk from today. May God help me!

AUGUST 31, FRIDAY

Finished reading Holmes' *Freedom and Growth.* Started reading Haeckel's *Evolution of Man.*

Today the Major applied caustic soda to the eye for conjunctivitis.

SEPTEMBER 2, SUNDAY

Finished reading the Bible yesterday. Started reading an illustrated account of Jesus today.

Lost in weight by three lbs. during the last week.

SEPTEMBER 9, SUNDAY

Finished reading the illustrated account of Jesus and also Kavi's *Muktadhara* and *Dubtoon Vahan.*[2] Weight went up by one lb.; it is now 101 lbs.

SEPTEMBER 16, SUNDAY

Devdas, Narandas, Keshu[3] and Kacho[4] saw me on Monday.[5] Finished reading the first part of Maulana Shibli's life of

[1] Glossary to the *Gita*; it was later revised to incorporate meanings given to words and phrases in Gandhiji's *Anasaktiyoga* (1929), a Gujarati translation of the *Gita,* and was published under the title *Gitapadarthakosh,* in 1936, by Navajivan Publishing House.

[2] Plays by Rabindranath Tagore

[3] Keshavlal, son of Maganlal Gandhi

[4] Krishnadas

[5] *Young India* published a brief report; *vide* Appendix V.

the Prophet, and also the preface to the Koran by Dr. Mahomed Ali.

SEPTEMBER 28, FRIDAY

This week finished reading Vivekanand's *Rajayoga* and Champakrai Jain's *Dharmani Ekata.* Finished reading life of the Prophet (by Maulana Shibli) today.

SEPTEMBER 30, SUNDAY

Started reading Nicholson's *Mystics of Islam* yesterday and finished it today. Started making the fair copy of *Gitakosh* today. Yesterday started reading *Sahaba Ekram,* Part II, and the unread portion of Urdu Reader No. V. Started reading Paul Carus's *Gospel of Buddha.* Today Major Jones came to bid me farewell.

OCTOBER 7, SUNDAY

Finished reading Paul Carus's *Gospel of Buddha* during the week. Reading Rhys Davids' Hibbert Lectures on Buddhism. Started reading Ameer Ali's *Spirit of Islam* today. Work on the fair copy of *Gitakosh* continues. Received a basket of fruits from Jamnalalji today.

Finished reading *Chhandogyopanishad* today and started reading *Brihadaranyak.*

OCTOBER 14, SUNDAY

Ba, Avantikabai, Jamnalalji and Savatibai came and saw me on Wednesday.

Finished reading Davids' *Hibbert Lectures on Buddhism.* Reading Sir Oliver Lodge's *Modern Problems.*

OCTOBER 21, SUNDAY

Finished reading Sir Oliver Lodge's *Modern Problems* and started the current issue of *Puratatva.*

OCTOBER 25, THURSDAY

Manzar Ali was taken to Prayag today.

Finished reading Ameer Ali's book on Tuesday.

Started reading Washington Irving's *Mahomed* yesterday. Started reading *Syadvada Manjari* today.

OCTOBER 26, FRIDAY

Abdul Gani was brought to this ward today.

NOVEMBER 4, SUNDAY

Abdul Gani started spinning on Wednesday.

Finished reading Irving's *Mahomed.*

Started reading *History of the Saracens* by Ameer Ali.

NOVEMBER 11, SUNDAY

Finished reading *Brihadaranyak Upanishad* on Tuesday. Started reading *History of Civilization in Europe* by Guizot on Thursday. Finished reading *Sahaba*, Part II, today. Will commence tomorrow Maulana Shibli's biography of Hasrat Omar.

NOVEMBER 12, MONDAY

Wrote a letter[1] today to the Superintendent saying that I would have to give up oranges and raisins from Wednesday because he could not provide Abdul Gani the diet of the latter's choice.

NOVEMBER 18, SUNDAY

Have given up oranges and raisins since Wednesday last. Found today that I have lost three pounds in weight, but my physical strength remains unaffected.

NOVEMBER 24, SATURDAY

Today finished reading Ameer Ali's *History of the Saracens* and also making the fair copy of the *Gitakosh*. Yesterday finished reading Guizot's *History of Civilization in Europe*. Today started reading Guizot's *History of Civilization in France*, Part II.

NOVEMBER 26, MONDAY

Yesterday started reading Motley's *Rise of the Dutch Republic*. Today commenced writing the history of Satyagraha in South Africa[2]. Finished reading Reese's autobiography and started reading Rajam Iyer's *Vedantabhraman*.

DECEMBER 9, SUNDAY

Today finished reading the first part of Motley's book and started the second part. Finished reading Rajam Iyer's *Vedantabhraman*.

On Wednesday finished reading Guizot's *History of Civilization in France*, Part II, and started Part III.

Finished reading *Syadvada Manjari* today. Started reading *Uttaradhyayan Sutra*. The experiment of doing without fruits is going on. Have been taking some bread with milk since Tuesday. Found that my weight had increased by two pounds; now it is 99.

DECEMBER 15, SATURDAY

Finished reading Guizot and started *Rosicrucian Mysteries*.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jail Superintendent, Yeravda", 12-11-1923.

[2] Originally in Gujarati, this book was published in two parts in 1924 and 1925 by the Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad, and the English translation in 1928, by S. Ganesan, Madras.

DECEMBER 16, SUNDAY

Finished reading the second part of Motley's book and started the third.

DECEMBER 23, SUNDAY

Ba, Mathuradas and Ramdas came to see me on Tuesday.

Ramabai Ranade[1] came on Wednesday. At the instance of the Superintendent, wrote a letter[2] to Harilal asking him to come and see me.

Have started taking fruits again since Tuesday evening. Last Sunday my weight stood as low as 96 and even the Superintendent got alarmed. Since Thursday started taking honey and increased the intake of bread to eight ounces.

I weighed 99 lbs. today. On Wednesday, finished reading *Rosicrucian Mysteries* and started Plato's *Dialogues*. Today finished reading the biography of Hasrat Omar and started reading Maulana Shibli's *Al Kalam* and also Woodroffe's *Shakta and Shakti*. Finished reading Motley's book.

DECEMBER 30, SUNDAY

Finished reading *Uttaradhyayan Sutra* and started *Bhagavati Sutra*. Finished reading Woodroffe's *Shakta and Shakti*. On Thursday, finished reading the first part of Plato's *Dialogues* and started the second.

From a copy of the Gujarati: S.N. 8039

APPENDIX: LIST OF BOOKS

* 157[3] *Natural History*
* 158 *The Wisdom of the Ancients*
* 159 *Natural Features of India*
* 178 *Stories from the History of Rome*
See Diary of 23-4-1922
* 205 *The Young Crusader*
* 212 *Lives of Fathers and Martyrs*
* 215 *Dropped from the Clouds*
264 *Ivanhoe*
282 *The Old Curiosity Shop*

[1] Ramabai Ranade; widow of Justice Mahadeo Govind Ranade; was associated with the Seva Sadan of Bombay and Poona in social welfare work for women and children.

[2] This is not available.

[3] The significance of the asterisks is not known, but the numerals apparently stand far catalogue numbers.

* 295 *The Five Empires*
305 *Westward Ho*
* 356 *Seekers after God*
Equality Bellamy
* 41 *The Five Nations*: Kipling
* 49 *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*
10 *The Second Jungle Book*
* 107 *J. Howard*
109 *Satires and Epistles of Horace*
* 111 Goethe's *Faust*
116 *Tropical Agriculture*
* 125 *Lays of Ancient Rome*
129 Primer of Marathi Language
* 132 *Natural History of Birds*
144 *Enoch Arden*
148 *Historical English Grammar*
149-50 Scott's Poetical Works
* 152 *Life and Voyages of Columbus*
Muktivivek[1]—Translation of Vidyaranyaswami's book
Kanta —Do
Malati Madhava[2]
Siddhantasara
Panchasati
Gulabsinh
Shrivritiprabhakar
Chatuh Sutri
Bhojprabandh
Vikramcharitra
Anubhavapradipika
Vastupalcharitra
Yogabindu
Kumarpalcharitra
Vivadtandav

From a copy: S.N. 8039

[1] The originals of this and the following book were in Sanskrit.
[2] This and the following are titles of books in Gujarati.

95. INTERVIEW TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

[SASSOON HOSPITAL,
POONA,
January 12, 1924]

... Dr. V. B. Gokhale came to me about 8-45 p.m. just as I was finishing my dinner; he told me how the Yeravda authorities had removed Mr. Gandhi to the Sassoon Hospital, where he was in charge. He was about to be operated for appendicitis.

. . . On my entering the room, we greeted each other and I enquired how he felt as to the operation. He answered firmly that the doctors had come to a definite conclusion and he was content to abide by it, and in reply to further inquiry, he said that he had full confidence in the medical men about him and that they had been very kind and very careful. Should there arise any public agitation, he added that it should be made known that he had no complaint whatever to make against the authorities and that so far as the care of his body went, their treatment left nothing to be desired. Then I enquired if Mrs. Gandhi had been informed of his condition. He said that she did not know the latest development, but she knew that for sometime he had not been well and he expected to hear from her, He then made inquiries of my wife and of my colleagues in the Servants of India Society, viz., Messrs Devadhar, Joshi, Patwardhan and Kunzru. He asked:

Have your frequent journeys out of India benefited your health?

Doctor Phatak then read a draft statement to be signed by Mr. Gandhi conveying his consent to the operation. After hearing it once, Mr. Gandhi put on his spectacles and read it himself. Then he said he would like the wording to be changed and asked Col. Maddock who was in the room what he thought. The Colonel said Mr. Gandhi knew best how to put it in appropriate language. His own suggestion would [not] be of much value.

Then he dictated a lengthy statement[1] which I took down in pencil.

When it was finished, I read it out to him once. Then he called Col. Maddock to his side and I read it again at his desire. Col. Maddock was quite satisfied and remarked: "Of course you know best how to put in proper language." He then drew up his proper posture for signing the paper, which he did in pencil. His hand shook very much and I noticed that he did not dot the "i". At the end he remarked to the doctor:

See how my hand trembles. You will have to put this right.

[1] The following item

Col. Maddock answered: "Oh! We will put tons and tons of strength into you."

As the operation room was being got ready, the doctors went out and I found myself nearly alone with the Mahatma. After a remark or two of a purely personal nature, I asked him whether he had anything particular to say. I noticed a touch of eagerness as he replied as though he was waiting for an opportunity to say something.

If there is an agitation for my release after the operation, which I do not wish, let it be on proper lines. My quarrel with the Government is there and will continue so long as the originating causes exist. Of course, there cannot be any conditions. If the Government think they have kept me long enough, they may let me go, that would be honourable if they think I am an innocent man and that my motives have been good. While I have a deep quarrel with the Government, I love the Englishmen and have many friends amongst them. They may release me. But it must not be on false issues. Any agitation must be kept on proper, non-violent lines. Perhaps, I have not expressed myself quite well, but you had better put it in your own inimitable style.

I then pressed him again for a message to his people, his followers or the country. He was surprisingly firm on this subject. *He said he was a prisoner of Government and he must observe the prisoner's code of honour scrupulously.* He was supposed to be civilly dead. He had no knowledge of outside events and he could not have anything to do with the public. He had no message.

"How is it then that Mr. Mahomed Ali communicated a message as from you the other day?" The words were scarcely out of my mouth when I regretted them, but recall was impossible.

He was obviously astonished at my question, and exclaimed:

Mr. Mahomed Ali! A message from me![1]

Briskly, at this point, the nurse came in with some articles of apparel for him, and signalled to me to depart. In a few minutes, he was shifted to the operation room. I sat outside marvelling at the exhibition I had witnessed of high-mindedness, forgiveness, chivalry and love transcending ordinary human nature, and what a mercy it was that the non-co-operation movement should have had a leader of such serene vision and sensitiveness to honour . . .

. . . I have read out this statement to Dr. Phatak who approves of it and adds that his inquiry as to a message elicited the same sort of answers.

The Hindu, 14-1-1924

[1] *Vide*, however, "Message to Mahomed Ali", 10-9-1923.

96. *LETTER TO COL. MADDOCK*[1]

SASSOON HOSPITAL,
POONA,
9.45 p.m., January 12, 1924[2]

DEAR COL. MADDOCK,

I know that you know the history of my illness during the past 6 months. You have been extraordinarily kind to me. You, the Surgeon-General and other medical gentlemen have come to the conclusion that any delay in performing the operation described by you to me involves considerable risk. You were kind enough to tell me that Government had authorized you to send for any of my special medical friends. I therefore suggested the names of Dr. Dalal and Dr. Jivraj Mehta. You have tried your utmost to secure their presence. But then you have not been able to get at either of them. I have the fullest confidence in you and regard being had to the serious nature of the case I would ask you please to go on with the operation without delay.

I am,
Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 8121

97. *MESSAGE TO THE COUNTRY*[3]

January 14, 1924

I am deeply touched by manifestation of deep affection shown to me by my countrymen during the critical period of my health. They need have no anxiety because every possible attention is being given me by medical authorities here.

Young India, 17-1-1924

[1] This was also published in *The Hindu,* 20-1-1924, and *The Searchlight,* 25-1-1924.

[2] The source gives the date as January 19, obviously a slip. Gandhiji was operated upon for appendicitis on January 12.

[3] The message, given to Dr. Phatak in response to anxious inquiries from all over the country, was first published in *The Bombay Chronicle,* 15-1-1924. *Young India* reproduced it with a short editorial note under the caption, "The Nation in Agony".

98. *INTERVIEW TO "THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"*

POONA,
January 19, 1924

The jail authorities cannot be blamed. Our fight must be clean. Appendicitis is a difficult disease to diagnose. Col. Murray is one of the best men I have met. He has been very kind to me. He is conscientious, considerate and kind. I hold the highest opinion about him.

The Searchlight, 27-1-1924

99. *INTERVIEW TO DILIP KUMAR ROY*[1]

February 2, 1924

Our conversation having that morning centred round music, Mahatmaji told me in passing how fond he really was of music even though he could not boast of the power of any expert or analytic appreciation. He had said:

I am so fond of music that once, while I was in a South African Hospital and ailing from a bruise on my upper lip, I felt greatly soothed as the daughter of a friend of mine sang the song 'Lead, Kindly Light' at my request.

On my asking him if he knew any of the beautiful songs of Mirabai, he said :

Yes, I have heard a good many of them. They are so beautiful. It's because they come from the heart and not from any desire to compose or to please a public.

I called the same evening at his request. After the music, I saw that it had affected him visibly. For I thought I saw his eyes glisten even in that none-too-bright light of the hospital.

"I feel," said I after a short pause, "that our beautiful music has been sadly neglected in the schools and colleges." Mahatmaji replied :

[1] The interview between Gandhiji and Roy, an exponent of Indian music and inmate of the Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry, took place at the Sassoon Hospital. The extract given here is from a report which was also reproduced in *The Hindu*, 7-2-1924, and later, featured in Roy's book *Among the Great*, Jaico Publishing House, Bombay. According to the author, Gandhiji had revised the reports of the talks and authorized him to publish them in the book.

Yes, it has, I have always said so.

Srijut Mahadeo Desai who was present throughout our conversation corroborated this."I am glad to hear you say so. Because I have been all along under the impression that you would be against all arts such as music."

I! Against music! Well, I know, I know . . . There are so many superstitions rife about me that it has become now almost impossible for me to overtake those who have set them afloat. As a result, my friends only smile at me when I try to lay any claim to being an artist myself.

"I am glad to hear this; because I have been given to understand that in your philosophy of life, which is one of unqualified asceticism, arts like music can hardly aspire to any place." Mahatmaji emphatically said:

But I maintain that asceticism is the greatest art in life.

"What I however meant by art just now is a somewhat different activity such as music or painting or sculpture for the matter of that. And I had thought that you would be rather opposed to them than otherwise." Mahatmaji said:

I, opposed to arts like music! Why, I cannot even conceive of an evolution of the religious life of India without music. I do say I am a lover of music as well as the other arts. Only, my values may be different from the accepted ones, that's all. I am doubtless against much that passes for art in these days. I do not for instance call that art which demands an intimate knowledge of its technique for its appreciation. If you go to the Satyagraha Ashram, you will find the walls bare. And my friends object to this. I admit I don't have paintings on the walls of my Ashram. But that is because I think that the walls are meant for sheltering us, and not because I am opposed to art as such. For have I not gazed and gazed at the wonderful vault of the starry sky—hardly ever tiring of the same? And I do say that I can never conceive of any painting superior to the star-studded sky in its satisfying effect on the mind. It has bewildered me, mystified me—sent me into the most wonderful ecstatic thrills imaginable. Side by side with this wondrous mystery of God's artistic handiwork, does not that of man appear to be the merest tinsel?

I said : "I agree with you when you say that Nature is a great artist, as also when you inveigh against the regrettable prostitution of art, which unhappily so often passes for art. I differ also from those artists who have acquired the habit of saying that art is even greater than life."

Exactly. Life is and must always be greater than all the arts put together. I go still further. For I say that he is the greatest

artist who leads the best life. For what is art without the background and setting of a worthy life? An art is to be valued only when it ennobles life. I object emphatically only when people say that art is everything, that it does not matter even if life has to be held subservient to its (i.e., art's) fulfilment. I have then to say that my values are different, that is all. But fancy people saying that I am opposed to all arts on that account!

The Bombay Chronicle, 5-2-1924

100. *INTERVIEW TO "YUGA DHARMA"*[1]

[Before *February 5, 1924*]

Dr. Sumant enquired of Mahatmaji how it was that such a disease could attack a man like him who was self-restricted *sanyami*. Mahatmaji replied that though he was moderate in food for many years, he had not yet been abstemious as he ought to have been. Mahatmaji said:

I am sure that my body does not need much food. In fact, very little food is required when one has to undergo mental work and a good deal of concentration. Perhaps my weight might have been decreased by being abstemious. But my body would have been surely improved.

Mahatmaji was of opinion that there was no necessity of pulse as food for those who were used to brain work. As regards the amelioration of the depressed classes, Mahatmaji expressed the necessity of working in the villages by encamping there. He did not at all believe the rumour that there was a depression in the workers of Gujarat.

In a further conversation Mahatmaji said :

I have plunged into politics simply in search of Truth. When I went to jail, I had fixed my programme for full six years. I have dictated a little about South Africa to Indulal, but my thoughts about the *Gita* are still to be dictated and I want to show how to epitomize the *Mahabharata*. I also think of writing my autobiography. Still I have to do much.

On Dr. Sumant commenting on the new Labour Government in England by saying that there were still people who hoped to get sweets from the Labour Government, Mahatmaji answered with a rather grave voice:

People do not leave off the hope of getting help from outside. Who can give swaraj? We have to take it. What about the

[1] Dr. Sumant Mehta, editor of the Gujarati magazine published from Ahmedabad, called on Gandhiji at the Sassoon Hospital before release.

depressed classes and what about solving the problem of Hindu-Muslim unity? What help can the Labour Government give you as regards these questions? Your future lies in your own hands. If you get sweet-balls, they will be made of stones.

The Hindu, 18-2-1924

101. *ANSWERS TO DREW PEARSON'S QUESTIONS*[1]

[After *February 5, 1924*][2]

Mr. Gandhi is recuperating in the mountain air of Poona, just a few miles from Yeravda prison in which two years of confinement so broke his health that unconditional release by the British Government was necessary.

His first statement, when interviewed, was:

I shall resume my activities for the attainment of swaraj just as soon as I am restored to complete health.

What course would he take? He answered quietly:

I still believe it possible for India to remain within the British Empire. I still put implicit faith in non-violence, which, if strictly followed by India, will invoke the best in the British people. My

[1] In a letter of March 26, 1924, from New York, to Devdas Gandhi, Drew Pearson threw light on the manner in which the script of the "interview" was prepared for release. Enclosing "the copy of the interview with father which you so kindly cabled me recently," Pearson went on to write, "You will note that the editor has taken certain privileges with the interview by dating it as cabled from India. My original article explains that the interview was cabled by you. The interview appeared in about 50 papers in the United States, the list of which I enclose, together with 8 papers in Australia and New Zealand, 3 in Japan and China, 4 in Canada and was sent to other papers in Brazil, Argentine, Chile, Mexico, Cuba, South Africa and Hawaii. You will note that I have enlarged a little bit on your skeletonized cable. In such places where you referred to the fact that your father's views do not change, I looked up his views as recorded in speeches and clippings from *Young India* and used such as a basis for enlarging the interview. I did this rather in a hurry and there was not time for your approval, but I trust it will be satisfactory for you." Acknowledging Devdas Gandhi's letter of March 7, Pearson wrote again on April 15, thanking him for his "trouble and thoughtfulness in telegraphing the message from your father. As I told you in an earlier letter, it was published widely all over the United States. I trust your father did not object to my quoting from his past speeches and writings . . . The telegram arrived in its original form without censorship."

Earlier, Drew Pearson had sought Sir George Lloyd's permission to visit Gandhiji in jail, which was refused. For an account of his interview with the Governor, *vide* Appendix VI.

[2] The answers were obviously given after Gandhiji's release on this date.

hope for the attainment of swaraj by non-violence is based upon an immutable belief in the goodness which exists deep down in all human nature.

I have always maintained that India had no quarrel with the English. Jesus denounced the wickedness of the Scribes and Pharisees, but he did not hate them. So we need not hate Englishmen, though we hate the system they have established. They have given India a system based upon force, by which they can feel secure only in the shadow of their forts and guns. We Indians, in turn, hope by our conduct to demonstrate to every Englishman that he is as safe in the remotest corner of India as he professes to feel behind the machine gun.

What do you mean by swaraj?

A full partnership for India with other parts of the Empire, just the same as Canada, South Africa and Australia enjoy. Nor shall we be satisfied until we obtain full citizens' rights throughout the British Dominions for all the King's subjects, irrespective of caste, colour or creed.

I asked Mr. Gandhi if he still believed in boycotting the Councils.

Yes, I still believe that we should not participate in the Councils until Britain suffers a change of heart and acts squarely with us. However, I do not wish to express any opinion on the action of the Nationalist party in participating in the Councils, until I have talked with the leaders. This I have already started to do.

When asked if imprisonment had changed his views on politics and religion, Mr. Gandhi replied :

They have undergone no change, but have been confirmed by two years of solitude and introspection. I have been experimenting with myself and friends by introducing religion into politics, and now I believe they cannot be divorced. Let me explain what I mean by religion. It is not Hinduism, which I prize most highly, but the religion which transcends Hinduism—the basic truth which underlies all the religions of the world. It is the struggle for truth—for self-expression. I call it the truth-force —the permanent element in human nature, constantly struggling to find itself, to know its Maker. This is religion.

I believe that politics cannot be divorced from religion. My politics can be summed up in two words—non-violent non-co-operation. And the roots of non-co-operation are buried in the religions of the world. Christ refused to co-operate with the Scribes

and Pharisees. Buddha fearlessly refused to co-operate with the arrogant priesthood of his day. Mahomed, Confucius, most of our great prophets have been non-co-operators. I simply and humbly follow in their footsteps.

Non-co-operation means nothing less than training in self-sacrifice. And this again was practised by the great teachers of the world. Strength does not come from physical capacity. It comes from indomitable will. I have ventured to place before India the ancient law of self-sacrifice—the obedience to the strength of the spirit.

By non-violence I do not mean cowardice. I do believe that, where there is only a choice between cowardice and violence, I would advise violence. But I believe that forgiveness adorns a soldier. And so I am not pleading for India to practise non-violence because she is weak, but because she is conscious of her power and strength. The *rishis*, who discovered the law of non-violence, were greater geniuses than Newton. Having themselves known the use of arms, they realized their uselessness and taught a weary world that its salvation lay not through violence, but through non-violence.

Therefore, I respectfully invite Americans to study carefully the Indian National Movement and they will therein find an effective substitute for war.

Before his imprisonment Mr. Gandhi was a most severe critic of modern civilization and I asked if his views had suffered any change.

They remain unchanged. My opinion of modern civilization is that it is a worship of materialism, resulting in the exploitation of the weak by the strong. American wealth has become the standard. The United States is the envy of all other nations. Meanwhile, moral growth has become stunted and progress measured in pounds, shillings and pence.

This land of ours, we are told, was once the abode of the gods. But it is not possible to conceive of gods inhabiting a land which is made hideous by the smoke and din of mill chimneys and factories, and whose roadways are traversed by rushing engines, dragging cars crowded with men who know not for the most part what they are after, do not care, and whose tempers do not improve by being uncomfortably packed together like sardines in boxes. Factories have risen on the corpses of men, women and children to create what we call civilization.

When asked for his opinion on the action of the Supreme Court in barring Indians from United States citizenship, Mr. Gandhi replied that he deplored

the decision, and considered it due to American ignorance of India's civilization and its possibilities.

Finally, when reminded of the fact that all India worshipped him as a "saint", that thousands of children were being named "Gandhidas", that wreaths were daily freshened over his pictures in millions of homes throughout India, Mr. Gandhi replied simply :

I think that word "saint" should be ruled out of present life. It is too sacred a word to be lightly applied to anybody, much less to one like myself, who claims only to be a humble searcher after Truth.[1]

From a newspaper cutting : S.N. 8956

102. *MESSAGE TO GUJARAT VIDYAPITH*

[On or before *February 6, 1924*][2]

The message was to the effect that the release from imprisonment was no cause for rejoicing but rather for greater humility. The burden of responsibility would be now heavier than ever to bear, and they must prepare themselves and get ready to be strong enough to bear it when the time came.

The Bombay Chronicle, 9-2-1924

103. *TELEGRAM TO LAJPAT RAI*[3]

[POONA,
On or after *February 6, 1924*]

THANKS I WILL NOT TROUBLE YOU WHILE YOU ARE ILL. WRITING.[4]

From a photostat : S.N. 8264

[1] *Vide* Vol. XVII, pp. 405-9.

[2] This was conveyed by C.F. Andrews to the members of the Sabarmati Ashram and the Gujarat Vidyapith on February 6. For Andrews's statement on Gandhiji's release, *vide* Appendix VII.

[3] This was in reply to Lajpat Rai's telegram of February 6, 1924, which read: "Returned Lahore this morning. Not quite well. Prakasam wires you want me Poona. Wire your wishes."

[4] *Vide* "Letter to Lajpat Rai", 8-2-1924.

104. INTERVIEW TO "THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"

[POONA,
Before *February 7, 1924*][1]

Interviewed by Mr. S. A. Brelvi, joint editor of *The Bombay Chronicle*, Mahatma Gandhi said that he had been preparing in his mind a message to his countrymen on his release. The message would take the form of a letter addressed to the President of the Congress, Maulana Mahomed Ali, just as, soon after his conviction, he had wished to speak to his countrymen through a letter addressed to the then President, Hakim Ajmal Khan Saheb. The letter to the Hakim Saheb, however, never reached him, because the Government of Bombay asked the Mahatma to alter and amend certain passages which he refused to do. The Mahatma intended to take the earliest opportunity of publishing that letter.

He was grieved to find, he said, that the decision of the Government to release him was based on considerations of his health. He would be very glad to believe that his release indicated a change in the attitude of Government towards him and his activities and a realization on their part that his preaching of non-violence was not a cover for violence as was represented by his misguided critics. He would heartily welcome any indication that the Government had grasped the fact that non-violence was the essence of the non-co-operation movement.

The Hindu, 8-2-1924

105. LETTER TO MAHOMED ALI[2]

SASSOON HOSPITAL,
POONA,
February 7, 1924

MY DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER,

I send you as President of the Congress a few words which I know our countrymen expect from me on my sudden release. I am sorry that the Government have prematurely released me on account of my illness. Such a release can bring me no joy, for I hold that the illness of a prisoner affords no ground for his release.

[1] The letter to Mahomed Ali, mentioned in the text, was written on February 7; *vide* the following item.

[2] This was also published in *The Bombay Chronicle* and *The Hindu*, 8-2-1924.

I would be guilty of ungratefulness if I did not tell you, and through you the whole public, that both the jail and the hospital authorities have been all attention during my illness. Col. Murray, the Superintendent of the Yeravda Prison, as soon as he suspected that my illness was at all serious, invited Col. Maddock to assist him and I am sure that the promptest measures were taken by him to secure for me the best treatment possible. I could not have been removed to the David and Sassoon Hospitals a moment earlier. Col. Maddock and his staff have treated me with the utmost attention and kindness. I may not omit the nurses who have surrounded me with sisterly care. Though it is now open to me to leave this hospital, knowing that I can get no better treatment anywhere else, with Col. Maddock's kind permission I have decided to remain under his care till the wound is healed and no further medical treatment is necessary.

The public will easily understand that for some time to come I shall be quite unfit for active work, and those who are interested in my speedy return to active life will hasten it by postponing their natural desire to see me. I am unfit and shall be so for some weeks perhaps to see a number of visitors. I shall better appreciate the affection of friends if they will devote greater time and attention to such national work as they may be engaged in and especially to hand-spinning.

My release has brought me no relief. Whereas before release I was free from responsibility save that of conforming to jail discipline and trying to qualify myself for more efficient service, I am now overwhelmed with a sense of responsibility I am ill-fitted to discharge. Telegrams of congratulations have been pouring in upon me. They have but added to the many proofs I have received of the affection of our countrymen for me. It naturally pleases and comforts me. Many telegrams, however, betray hopes of results from my service which stagger me. The thought of my utter incapacity to cope with the work before me humbles my pride.

Though I know very little of the present situation in the country, I know sufficient to enable me to see that, perplexing as the national problems were at the time of the Bardoli resolutions, they are far more perplexing today. It is clear that, without unity between Hindus, Mahomedans, Sikhs, Parsis and Christians and other Indians, all talk of swaraj is idle. This unity which I fondly believed, in 1922, had been nearly achieved has, so far as Hindus and Mussalmans are concerned, I observe, suffered a severe check. Mutual trust has given place to distrust. An indissoluble bond between the various communities must be established if we

are to win freedom. Will the thanksgiving of the nation over my release be turned into a solid unity between the communities? That will restore me to health far quicker than any medical treatment or rest-cure. When I heard in the jail of the tension between Hindus and Mussalmans in certain places, my heart sank within me. The rest I am advised to have will be no rest with the burden of disunion preying upon me. I ask all those who cherish love towards me to utilize it in furtherance of the union we all desire. I know that the task is difficult. But nothing is difficult if we have a living faith in God. Let us realize our own weakness and approach Him and He will surely help. It is weakness which breeds fear and fear breeds distrust. Let us both shed our fear, but I know that, even if *one* of us will cease to fear, we shall cease to quarrel. Nay, I say that your tenure of office will be judged solely by what you can do in the cause of union. I know that we love each other as brothers. I ask you, therefore, to share my anxiety and help me to go through the period of illness with a lighter heart.

If we could but visualize the growing pauperism of the land and realize that the spinning-wheel is the only remedy for the disease, the wheel will leave us little leisure for fighting. I had during the last two years ample time and solitude for hard thinking. It made me a firmer believer than ever in the efficacy of the Bardoli programme and, therefore, in the unity between the races, the charkha, the removal of untouchability and the application of non-violence in thought, word and deed to our methods as indispensable for swaraj. If we faithfully and fully carry out this programme, we need never resort to civil disobedience and I should hope that it will never be necessary. But I must state that my thinking prayerfully and in solitude has not weakened my belief in the efficiency and righteousness of civil disobedience. I hold it, as never before, to be a man's or a nation's right and duty when its vital being is in jeopardy. I am convinced that it is attended with less danger than war and, whilst the former, when successful, benefits both the resister and the wrongdoer, the latter harms both the victor and the vanquished.

You will not expect me to express any opinion on the vexed question of return by Congressmen to the Legislative Councils and Assembly. Though I have not in any way altered my opinion about the boycott of Councils, Law Courts and Government Schools, I have no data for coming to a judgment upon the alterations made at Delhi, and I do not propose to express any opinion until I have had the opportunity of discussing the question with our illustrious

countrymen who have felt called upon, in the interest of the country, to advise removal of the boycott of legislative bodies.

In conclusion, may I, through you thank all the very numerous senders of congratulatory messages. It is not possible for me personally to acknowledge each message. It has gladdened my heart to see among the messages many from our Moderate friends. I have, and non-co-operators can have, no quarrel with them. They too are well-wishers of their country and serve to the best of their lights. If we consider them to be in the wrong, we can hope to win them over only by friendliness and patient reasoning, never by abusing. Indeed, we want to regard Englishmen too as our friends and not misunderstand them by treating them as our enemies. And if we are today engaged in a struggle against the British Government, it is against the system for which it stands and not against Englishmen who are administering the system. I know that many of us have failed to understand and always bear in mind the distinction and, in so far as we have failed, we have harmed our cause.

I am,
Your sincere friend and brother,
M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 14-2-1924

106. LETTER TO PRANJIVAN MEHTA

SASSOON HOSPITAL,
POONA,
Maha Sud 2 [February 7, 1924][1]

BHAISHRI PRANJIVAN,

I thought of you constantly. Hardly a day passed in the jail when I did not remember you. Having protested to the Government on the issue of my correspondence and stopped writing letters altogether, how could I make an exception in your case and write to you? Today is the third day since my release. There is some strength in my hand and the very first letter I am writing is to you.

As we are now both unwell, who should enquire about whom? My health is improving. The wound has not healed completely.

[1] The letter was written on the third day after Gandhiji's release on February 5.

The doctor thinks at present that it will take about a week to heal. It seems I shall have to pass this whole month here. What to do after that I shall decide only then.

Revashankarbhai and the others who had been to see you tell me that you are much better now. Write to me yourself only if you can write letters with your own hand, otherwise dictate to someone. I shall certainly like seeing you when I am well. Do you think your health will permit your coming?

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 131

107. LETTER TO LAJPAT RAI[1]

SASSOON HOSPITAL,
February 8 [*1924*]

DEAR LALAJI,

I had promised to write to you, but could not until now. My hand is still weak. I wanted to dictate the letter, but when I was ready to do so, none of my assistants was available.

I do not remember having told Shri Prakasam that you should come down to Poona and see me. But then I do much want to see you at the earliest opportunity and have a long chat with you about Hindu-Muslim unity, Hindu-Sikh unity, the Councils, the untouchables, and other problems. But this is possible only when you are perfectly well and I am able to bear the strain of a fairly long conversation. But how can I ask you to take the trouble of coming over here if your health is not quite all right or if it cannot stand the long journey? Moreover, I want you to have at your disposal full three days when you come here. Maybe, we may have to carry on our talks in separate instalments. So far as I am concerned, I should, I think, be fit enough by next

[1] Part of this letter, which is likely to have been written in English, was published in *The Hindu*, 12-2-1924. It was in reply to a telegram of February 7 from Lajpat Rai, reading : "Will be fit to travel few days. Will come immediately. Meantime awaiting your letter. Your health greatest importance."

Wednesday, unless the wound is hiding treacherous stitches or any other foreign matter.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 17-2-1924

108. TELEGRAM TO LAJPAT RAI[1]

POONA,

February 12, 1924

THANK YOU EIGHTEENTH WILL SUIT ME ADMIRABLY.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 8325

109. LETTER TO MAHOMED YAKUB

[*February 12, 1924*][2]

Mahatma Gandhi has written to Mr. Mahomed Yakub requesting him to desist from moving in the Assembly[3] to recommend the Nobel Peace Prize to him, his efforts in the cause of world peace being their own prize. Any recognition by Europe of the doctrine of non-violence would be welcome to Mahatmaji, but the value of such recognition would be lost if the prize is not spontaneously offered, but is to be awarded through extraneous recommendation. Moreover, the idea of his name being put forward in competition with that of a countryman of his is extremely distasteful to Mahatmaji.[4]

The Hindu, 14-2-1924

[1] Lajpat Rai had telegraphed Gandhiji on February 12, 1924: "Thanks. Can start fourteenth reaching eighteenth. Wire wishes." Lajpat Rai replied to this stating that he would reach Poona on February 17 and see Gandhiji the following day. S.N. 8326

[2] As given in Mahomed Yakub's reply dated February 17.

[3] Central Legislative Assembly of which he was a member

[4] Mahomed Yakub in his reply agreed to respect Gandhiji's wish, and added: "The contents of your letter are so noble that I would like to have them placed on the record of the Assembly." S.N. 8334

110. LETTER TO NARAHARI PARIKH

POONA,
Wednesday [February 13, 1924][1]

BHAISHRI NARAHARI,

Mahadev told me today about your mind being at peace. I often feel tempted to wire, but I control myself. I do not want to be impatient. You and I, all of us, are in the hands of God. We should always obey the dictates of our conscience and think no more. Why should we then worry about the result? I only want to be assured that Manibehn[2] is not at all worried and that she understands the significance of your penance.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 9044

111. ANTI-INDIAN CAMPAIGN IN SOUTH AFRICA[3]

[POONA,
February 14, 1924]

As one expected to understand the situation created in South Africa by the anti-Asiatic movement now going on there, and especially the Class Areas Bill now under consideration by the Union Parliament, I deem it my duty to place my opinion on the situation before the public.

The anti-Asiatic agitation on the part of Europeans in South Africa is no new thing. It is almost as old as the first settlement of unindentured Indians in South Africa, and is principally due to trade jealousy on the part of white retail traders. As in other parts of the world so in South Africa, interested men, if they sufficiently persist, find no difficulty in gathering the support round them of those who are not so interested, but who do not think for themselves. The present agitation, I remember, was begun as

[1] The Wednesday following the commencement of addressee's fast to which the letter alludes fell on this date.

[2] Addressee's wife

[3] This statement was published generally in the Press.

early as 1921[1], and the Class Areas Bill is, no doubt, one result of that agitation.

Before dealing with the nature and effect of the Bill, it is necessary to point out that it is in breach of the compromise of 1914 arrived at between the Union Government and the Indian community of South Africa.[2] But it was a compromise to which both the Indian Government and the Imperial Government were as much party as the Union Government and the Indian community, because the compromise was arrived at with the knowledge and concurrence of the Imperial and the Indian Governments. The latter had even sent Sir Benjamin Robertson as a representative, technically to watch the course of the Commission that was appointed by the Union Government to inquire into the Indian position, but in reality to negotiate a settlement. The main terms of the compromise were settled before Sir Benjamin Robertson, who represented the Indian Government, returned to India.

In accordance with that compromise, no further anti-Asiatic legislation was to be passed by the Union Government. The understanding at the time was that the legal position of the Indian would be gradually improved and that the then existing anti-Asiatic legislation would, in time to come, be repealed. The contrary has, however, happened. The public may remember that the first attempt to break the spirit of the compromise was made when, in the Transvaal, an attempt was made to enforce the existing legislation adversely to the Indians and contrary to the practice that prevailed at the time of the compromise. The Class Areas Bill, however, goes much further in restricting Indian liberty.

Whatever may be the other implications of the compromise, this much cannot be disputed by any party, that the settlement of 1914 pledged the Union Government not to put further restrictions upon the Indian liberty, and apart from the general powers of disallowance vested in His Majesty under the Letter of Instructions addressed to the Governor-General of South Africa, the Imperial Government if they would be true to their trust are bound, at any cost, to insist upon the observance of the terms of the compromise referred to by me.

We in India may not ignore the difficulties of the Union Government which is dependent for its existence solely upon the will of the Europeans of South Africa expressed through their elected representatives to the exclusion of Indians and the natives

1 *Vide* Vol. XIX, pp. 528-9.
2 *Vide* Vol. XII, pp. 448-52.

of the soil. This unwarranted exclusion is the original flaw in the South African constitution, as it is to be found in the constitution of most of the self-governing Colonies which have their native populations and Indian populations. As the Imperial Government permitted the flaw, it is in honour bound to prevent untoward results arising from it. South Africa and Kenya will presently show what moral worth there is in the Imperial system. Pressure of public opinion may, and probably will, bring about temporary relief in both the places; but it will be only temporary. It can merely postpone the final act in the tragedy unless some unforeseen radical change, either in England or in India, takes place.

And now for the Bill itself. Unlike the Natal Municipal Franchise Bill, which happily the Union Governor-General has in effect vetoed and which applied only to Natal, the Class Areas Bill is designed to apply to all the four[1] provinces. It enables the Government to segregate all the domiciled Indians and other Asiatics alike for residence and trade. It is, therefore, an extension, in a modified manner, of the location system[2] devised as early as 1885 by the late Transvaal Government.

Let me say in a few words what the segregation may mean. The Indian Location in Pretoria, where, in spite of the Law of 1885, not a single Indian has been as yet compelled to remove, is situated far away from the town itself and entirely outside the beat of the buyer, whether English, Dutch or native. The only trade possible in such Locations is trade among themselves. Segregation, therefore, carried out to the full means nothing less than compulsory repatriation without any compensation. It is true that the Bill appears to preserve to a certain extent the existing rights. But that reservation is of little consequence to the Indian settlers. I do not wish to burden this note by citing illustrations from my South African experience to show how such reservations have, in practice, proved almost useless.

Finally, let it be remembered that, when Indian emigration to South Africa was unrestricted, the fear of the Europeans was expressed to be that South Africa might be swamped by India's millions. All the South African statesmen then used to say that South Africa could easily digest a small Indian population and could even give it a liberal treatment, but that the European settlers could never rest content so long as the possibility of swamping remained. Now that the so-called fear of swamping has been re-

[1] The source has "poor", evidently a misprint.

[2] Indians and natives in South Africa were forced to reside in certain areas which were known as "Locations"; *vide* Vol. II, p. 17.

moved, practically since 1897, the cry is raised for segregation; and, if that is accomplished, the next step will be compulsory repatriation. If the segregated Indians do not voluntarily retire, the fact is that the more accommodating the European settlers of South Africa find the Imperial trustees to be, the more grasping they become in their anti-Asiatic demands.

Young India, 21-2-1924

112. TELEGRAM TO LAJPAT RAI[1]

[POONA,
On or after *February 15, 1924*]

SORRY YOU HAVE FEVER AGAIN. HOPE YOU WILL BE SOON FREE. NO HURRY ABOUT COMING. SUGGEST YOUR COMING POONA FOR REST.

From a photostat : S.N. 8333

113. TELEGRAM TO C. R. DAS[2]

[POONA,
On or after *February 19, 1924*]

WILL BE DELIGHTED MEET FRIENDS NAMED. WILL HOLD SILENCE PACT TILL MEETING.

GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 8353

[1] This was in reply to Lajpat Rai's telegram of February 15, 1924, which read : "Had fever yesterday. Could not start. Will wire again."

[2] This was in reply to C. R. Das's telegram of February 19, 1924, which read : "Motilal and I coming together. Have wired him to fix date. Want you hear me before you advise Hindu-Muslim pact. Suggest meeting of Motilal myself Lajpat and Malaviya in your presence."

114. LETTER TO NARAHARI PARIKH

Thursday [February 21, 1924][1]

BHAISHRI NARAHARI,

I am glad to know that your fast is over. Bhai Lakshmidas, Ramji and Gangabehn are sitting here as I write this letter. The excitement of the fast while it is in progress keeps up our spirit, but the period following its end is a difficult time. Be careful in your food. For the present take liquid food only. Start taking chapatis and other things gradually. I am sure you will be patient in your attitude towards others. However, I caution you again since you have had difficulties in the past. After the fast is over, the mind becomes restless and it is difficult to control it. More when you come.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 9045

115. TELEGRAM TO DR. SATYAPAL[2]

[On or after *February 23, 1924*]

DR. SATYAPAL[3]

DISTRESSED OVER NEWS MORE BECAUSE HELPLESS AND UNABLE ADVISE WITHOUT FULL STUDY OF WHICH SICKNESS RENDERS ME INCAPABLE.

From a photostat : S.N. 9916

[1] 'Thursday' here is evidently of the week following February 13, the date of Gandhiji's previous letter, written when the fast was on.

[2] This was in reply to Dr. Satyapal's telegram received on February 23, 1924, which read : "Situation Jaiton serious. Jatha fired at. Kitchlew and Gidwani arrested. Several died many wounded. Exact number unknown. Reporters not allowed. Congress Committee sent ambulance corps already. They not permitted to work. Working Committee passed resolutions to send another corps. Administrator-General Nabha wired for permission corps to relieve suffering. Shiromani Committee assured all possible help. Wire further instructions." The telegram was followed by a letter of the same date, written earlier; *vide* Appendix VIII.

[3] Congress leader of the Punjab.

116. TELEGRAM TO MAHOMED ALI[1]

[POONA,
On or after *February 24, 1924*]

NOT INFORMED OR FIT ENOUGH GUIDE DELIBERATIONS COMMITTEE.

GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 8371

117. OPEN LETTER TO AKALIS[2]

POONA,
February 25, 1924

DEAR COUNTRYMEN,

It was with great distress that I heard about the shooting of an Akali Jatha on the orders of the Administrator of the Nabha State, resulting in several members being killed and many more wounded.[3] In reply to telegrams, beyond sending a message of sympathy, I had no wish to say or do anything more. It is contrary to the wish of Col. Maddock, who has covered me with every form of kindness during my illness, that I am undertaking a moderate amount of activity in the shape of informing myself of the prevailing situation in the country. The following telegram just received from Zira, "Come unminding health condition soon—Akali Jatha", compels me to say something in connection with the tragedy just mentioned. I do not happen to know the sender of the telegram, but had it been at all possible for me, I would certainly have gone down in reply to the message. The wound being yet unhealed, any such journey is a physical impossibility.

[1] This was in reply to Mahomed Ali's telegram of February 24, 1924: "If you consider necessary please send messages with instructions regarding situation recently created to Delhi. Working Committee meeting 26th." S.N. 8371

[2] This was published generally in the Press.

[3] The firing took place at Jaiton, on February 21, 1924, on a procession of Sikhs, including an Akali Jatha of 500 which had come all the way from Amritsar, after a march of over 3 weeks, to celebrate the anniversary of the Nankana incident in 1921. The official estimate of casualties was 21 killed and 33 wounded; *vide India in 1923-24.*

I am, therefore, doing the next best thing. I need hardly assure the Akali Sikhs of my sympathy in the loss of so many brave men and many more being wounded. Without full facts before me, I am unable to say whether the march of a large number of men in order to pay devotion to the shrine of Gangsar at Jaiton was or was not justified. But I would ask the Akali Sikhs not to send any more Jathas without further deliberation and consultation with those leaders outside the Sikh community who have hitherto been giving them advice. It would be well to stop and watch developments arising out of the tragedy. One of the telegrams received by me tells me that the Jatha was and remained throughout strictly non-violent. You have, from the very commencement, claimed that your movement is perfectly non-violent and religious. I would like every one of us to understand all the implications of non-violence.

I am not unaware of the fact that non-violence is not your final creed. It is, therefore, doubly incumbent upon you to guard against any violence in thought or word creeping in the movement. Over 25 years of the practice of non-violence in the political field has shown me as clearly as daylight that, in every act of ours, we have to watch our thoughts and words in connection with the movement in which we may be engaged. Non-violence is impossible without deep humility and the strictest regard for truth and, if such non-violence has been possible in connection with movements not termed religious, how much easier it should be with those like you who are conducting a strictly religious movement?

I have deemed it necessary to reiterate what I used to say about non-violence before my imprisonment, because I have observed, during my brief study of the events of the past years, that we who claim to be engaged in a non-violent movement have not fully in thought and speech conformed to our creed during the past two years, as we certainly did not during the previous years. I am sorry to have to say that what I wrote about ourselves in the pages of *Young India* during the three months prior to my arrest holds truer today than it did then.

I have not the slightest doubt in my mind that, had we practised non-violence in the sense I mean during all these five years, we would not only have achieved our common goal, but there would be today no differences and quarrels between Hindus and Mussalmans. In drawing your attention, therefore, to the necessity of non-violence in your special struggle about your Gurdwaras, I do not wish to be understood to mean that there

has been greater disregard of the essentials of non-violence amongst you than amongst the other communities.

But a word of caution is more necessary in your case, because you have never flagged. You have been incessantly active in the pursuit of your special goal. I would, therefore, have you to search yourselves and, if you find that you have not been true to the standard you set before yourselves, to cease further demonstration for the time being and perform the necessary cleansing process before beginning anew; and I doubt not that your effort will be crowned with success.

I remain,
Your friend and servant,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 10055; also *Young India*, 28-2-1924

118. TELEGRAM TO DAS[1]

[POONA,
On or after *February 25, 1924*]

PHYSICALLY IMPOSSIBLE. WOUND UNHEALED. PRAY WIRE SITUATION.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 8376

119. MY JAIL EXPERIENCES[2]

POONA,
February 26, 1924

It was my intention to publish all the important correspondence I had with the authorities during my incarceration as part of my jail experiences, which I intend to write out if health

[1] This was in reply to addressee's telegram of February 25, 1924, from Zira which read: "Come unminding health condition soon. — Akali Jatha" The identity of Das is not known. *Vide* also "Statement on Open Letter to Akalis", 28-2-1924.

[2] This was Gandhiji's prefatory note to the correspondence which, as a prisoner, he had carried on with the Yeravda Jail authorities from April 1922 onwards.

and time permit. But it is not possible for me to do so for some time to come. Meanwhile, friends have urged me to publish the correspondence without delay. I appreciate the force of their reasoning, and, therefore, present the readers of *Young India* with a portion of it this week. The main part of the contention raised in the letter[1] to Hakimji stands good even in the light of subsequent experience. But, in justice to the Jail officials, I must add that, so far as my physical comfort was concerned, progressively better facilities were given to me. Mr. Banker, much to my joy, was restored to me. The marking line referred to in the first letter to Hakimji was done away with, and both of us had a run of the whole yard. On Mr. Banker's discharge, without any request on my part, the then Superintendent, Major Jones, obtained the Government's permission to send Mr. Manser Ali Sokta to me as a companion, a consideration which I very greatly esteemed. For, Mr. Manser Ali Sokta was not only a valuable companion, but was also an ideal Urdu teacher for me. Soon after, Mr. Indulal Yagnik came and added to our pleasure. Major Jones then transferred us three to the European ward where we had superior accommodation and not a bad garden in front of us. On Mr. Manser Ali Sokta's discharge, Major Jones's successor, Col. Murray, obtained the Government's permission to put Mr. Abdul Gani with me as a companion who, in addition to giving Mr. Yagnik and myself joy, replaced Mr. Manser Ali Sokta as my Urdu teacher and took great pains in order to improve my Urdu calligraphy. Had my sickness not interrupted the course, he would have made of me a passable Urdu scholar. So far, therefore, as my physical comforts were concerned, both the Government and the Jail officials did all that could possibly be expected to make me happy. And if I suffered from illness now and then, it is my firm belief that neither the Government nor the Jail authorities could in any way be blamed. I was allowed to choose my own diet and both Major Jones and Col. Murray, as also in this respect Col. Dalziel, who preceded Major Jones, strictly respected all my scruples about diet. The European jailers too were most attentive and courteous. I cannot recall a single occasion when they can be said to have unduly interfered with me. And even whilst I was subjected to ordinary jail inspection, to which I cheerfully submitted, they carried it out considerately and even apologetically. I entertain high regard for both Major Jones and Col. Murray as men. They never let me feel that I was a prisoner.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Hakim Ajmal Khan", 14-4-1922.

Subject to what I have said about the kindness of officials, I am unable to revise the estimate I gave in Hakimji's letter about the soulless policy of the Government regarding political prisoners. All I have said in that letter was confirmed by later experience. For proof of this statement the reader must wait till I am able to write out my experiences. My purpose just now is to avoid any the least possibility of the correspondence being so interpreted as to cast any reflection upon the Jail officials or, for that matter, even upon the Government, so far as my physical well-being was concerned.

I must not close this note without expressing my deep gratitude to the convict warders who were placed in charge of us. Instead of acting as supervisors, they rendered me and all my companions every assistance. They would not allow us to do any labour in the shape of cleaning the cells, etc. I shall have to say more about them in my experiences, but I cannot restrain myself against mentioning the name of Gangappa. He became a most efficient nurse to me. His scrupulous regard to every detail, his always anticipating every want of mine, his readiness to serve me at all hours of the night, his loving nature, his strict honesty and his general observance of the Jail rules and the Jail discipline commanded my admiration. I wonder how society can punish a man capable of showing such lofty character and how a Government can keep such a man in prison. Gangappa is unlettered. He is not a political prisoner. He was convicted of murder, or some such crime. But I must not pursue this subject any further. I must postpone its consideration to a future date. I have mentioned Gangappa merely to pay my humble tribute to fellow-prisoners like him.

M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 28-2-1924

120. *STATEMENT ON OPEN LETTER TO AKALIS*[1]

POONA,
February 28, 1924

I have just read a paragraph in the news column of *The Bombay Chronicle* of the 28th February about the Jaiton tragedy in which it is suggested that my open letter to the Akali Sikhs is based on wrong information supplied to me and that "in this respect people mostly suspect Lala Lajpat Rai". In justice to Lalaji, I wish to state that, before he saw me, I had read all I could about the tragedy and that, when the telegram inviting me to go to the Punjab was received, I had made up my mind, before Lalaji had seen that telegram, that I should make some such statement as ultimately I did make. As the telegram asking me to come down and stop Akali Jathas was received from Zira and I did not know anybody there and as I was anxious that the advice I tendered should reach the Akali Sikhs as early as possible, I adopted the method of the open letter. My letter was based purely on the information gleaned by me from the papers and the knowledge acquired by me after my release about the state of the spirit of non-violence in thought, word and deed in the country. Lalaji did see the letter and under his pressure I struck out a large number of passages which otherwise I would have retained and which were stronger than the final letter. Lalaji further pressed me to end the letter at the clause advising the Akali Sikhs not to send another Jatha before deliberation with non-Sikh advisers, but as I felt that a general reference to the implications of non-violence at this moment was of vital importance, I was obliged respectfully to differ from Lalaji's advice and retained the passages regarding non-violence.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : G.N. 5212; also *The Hindu*, 29-2-1924

[1] *Vide* pp. 210-2.

121. INTERVIEW TO SIND DEPUTATION

POONA,
February 28, 1924

A deputation consisting of Mr. Jairamdas Doulatram, Kazi Abdul Rehman, Seth Isserdas and Mr. R. K. Sidhwa waited upon Mahatma Gandhi this morning requesting him to come to Karachi to restore his health. Mahatmaji was lying in bed and received the deputation cheerfully.

Mr. Sidhwa acted as spokesman and said : "Your health will be immensely improved on the sea beach of Karachi where the weather is excellent." Mahatmaji replying said :

I would wish I could come to Karachi to gain health because I know Clifton is an excellent place, but I wish to remain in a central place so that friends would not find it inconvenient to see me from places far off. Hence I have decided to stay in Andheri[1] near the sea.

MR. SIDHWA : We look to your health first and those intending to see you could come even from thousands of miles. So you should come to Karachi. People are more anxious about your health.

It is true, friends could come to see me from any distance, but I don't want to trouble them. I had an invitation from Ceylon also and, although I have not seen Ceylon—I am told that it is a beautiful and lovely place—for the convenience of visitors with whom I have to consult often, I have decided to remain near Bombay. I had once decided to live at Dadabhoy Naoroji's house and I was glad that I would be staying in the house of persons under whom I had learnt politics.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 4-3-1924

[1] A suburb of Bombay

122. LETTER TO G. N. KANITKAR

POONA,
February 29, 1924

MY DEAR KANITKAR,

You are hatching before the hen has come to the roost. I have no idea when the autobiography will be commenced. If, however, it ever sees the light of day, as far as I am concerned, you shall have the right of translation. But I am afraid Kaka or Anandaswami will have the final say in the matter.[1] If you, therefore, want to take premature precaution, please write to one of them, or both.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

GAJANAN N. KANITKAR
MANAGING TRUSTEE, S. R. PATHSHALA
CHINCHWAD

From the original: C.W. 956. Courtesy: G. N. Kanitkar

123. LETTER TO D. V. GOKHALE

SASSOON HOSPITAL,
POONA,
February 29, 1924

DEAR MR. GOKHALE,

I was pained to see a paragraph in the *Kesari* referring to what little I am doing to understand the dispute between the Moslem trustees and the Hindus concerned. I would like you, if you could, to prevent further reference to my work in connection with it. Any such publicity, in my opinion, lessens my usefulness for truce.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SH. D. V. GOKHALE
POONA

From a photostat: G. N. 5213

[1] Kaka Kalelkar and Swami Anand were connected with *Navajivan* and *Young India*.

124. *MESSAGE TO POONA MEETING*[1]

POONA,
March 1, 1924

I wish the meeting every success. Had we developed enough strength, we could have secured Mr. Horniman's return long ago. The Government have sinned doubly, first in deporting him and secondly in not permitting him to return, but they have sinned because we were weak.

The Hindu, 3-3-1924

125. *STATEMENT ON AKALI MOVEMENT*

[POONA,]
March 4, 1924

If I am entirely satisfied as to the nature and implications of the present Akali movement and the methods adopted to gain the end, I should have no hesitation in throwing myself heart and soul into it and even in burying myself in the Punjab, if it became necessary in order to guide the movement. The satisfaction that I require is on the following :

(1) The strength of the Akalis.

(2)(a) A clear manifesto publicly stating the minimum, which I understand to be the performance of the *Akhand Path* ceremony in Gangsar Gurdwara, the Sikhs openly and sincerely declaring that it has no political end and that they do not desire, through the *Akhand Path* movement, in any shape or form, to carry on an agitation, directly or indirectly, for the restoration of the Nabha Maharaja[2]. The

[1] This was a meeting of citizens held under the presidentship of Prof. R. P. Paranjpye to protest against the refusal of the British Government to issue B. G. Horniman a passport. Horniman had been deported in 1919; *vide* Vol. XV. Gandhiji's message was read out by C. F. Andrews at the meeting which adopted a resolution holding Horniman's deportation illegal and demanding facilities for his return.

[2] The Maharaja of Nabha abdicated in early 1923 and the Government of India took over the administration of the State. The reason apparently was the friction which had lately developed between Nabha and the neighbouring

agitation which the Akalis intend to carry on in connection with such restoration will be on an independent footing and will be purely a separate movement.

(b) In connection with the movement for control of gurdwaras in every case of disputed control or possession, the matter should be referred to arbitration. In the case of historical gurdwaras, it will be assumed that all such gurdwaras must remain in the control of the S.G.P. Committee. But the question of fact whether a particular gurdwara is or is not historical will be a subject matter of arbitration, and the burden of proving that it is so will lie on the shoulders of the S.G.P. Committee.

With reference to all other gurdwaras, all the facts in dispute should be a subject matter of arbitration.

In the event of the party in possession of such gurdwaras declining to surrender control to the S.G.P. Committee or to refer the matter in dispute to arbitration, the Akalis would be free to take such direct action as is consistent with non-violence in the strictest sense of the term.

(3) Full assurance and, therefore, a document intended for publication, signed by all the principal leaders or on behalf of the S.G.P.C., giving a description of the methods which will clearly set forth all the implications of non-violence. By the term I do not wish to convey that non-violence is to be regarded in the document referred to above as the final creed of the Sikhs, which I know it is not. But I do understand that their methods, so far as this Gurdwara movement is concerned, will be absolutely non-violent, that is to say, the Akalis will be non-violent in thought, word and deed in connection with all persons, whether Government officials, English and otherwise, or whether members of the public belonging to any denomination whatsoever, who may be regarded as opponents of the objects of the Akali movement. Absolute adherence to truth I regard as an integral part of any scheme of non-violence, whether it is temporary or permanent and whether it is restricted to persons or places. It, therefore, admits of no diplomacy, as we understand the term, and it rejects altogether the prevailing normal idea

State of Patiala. The Shiromani Gurdwara Prabhandhak Committee, a body in charge of Sikh religious affairs, contended that the abdication was not voluntary and demanded that the Maharaja be restored to his throne. *Vide India in 1923-24.*

that it is legitimate to have surreptitious methods with regard to opponents. It follows that there is to be no secrecy.

(4) That the movement is neither anti-Hindu nor anti any other race or creed.

(5) That the S.G.P.C. has no desire for the establishment of Sikh Raj and, as a matter of fact, the Committee is purely a religious body and, therefore, as such can have no secular object or intention.

As to the restoration of Nabha Maharaja:

In my opinion, whatever the true facts may be, the Maharaja has by his writings made it practically impossible for his well-wishers to carry on an effective agitation for his restoration. If, however, he makes a public statement that all the writings were practically extorted from him and that he is quite willing and anxious that all the facts against him should be published and if he is prepared to face all the consequences of the agitation, viz., deprivation of titles, annuity, etc., and if all his allegations regarding duress can be proved, it is possible to carry on an effective and even successful agitation.

In any event, when the declaration of the kind mentioned is made by the Maharaja, the agitation should be an all-India agitation. The Akalis should merely assist in the observation of faith.

M. K. GANDHI

From photostats : G.N. 3766 and 3767

126. LETTER TO SIKH FRIENDS

[POONA,]
March 4, 1924

DEAR FRIENDS,

I learnt through Punditji Motilal after you had gone that the S.G.P.C. was actually defending the accused in the matter of the prosecution of Akalis. I learnt, too, that a Hindu temple within the precincts of the Golden Temple had been destroyed by the Akalis and that the latter took their stand upon religion. In your letter, which you have promised, I would like you please to deal with all these questions.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3767

127. *LETTER TO MAHOMED ALI*

SASSOON HOSPITAL,
POONA,
March 5, 1924

DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER,

My whole heart goes out to you in your distress. Hayat has given me a painful account of Amina's illness.[1] I read in the paper, too, that you could not attend the Khilafat Conference in Sind —that fact by itself shows how serious the illness must be. God tests us in many ways. He wants to know how His creature acquits himself in the presence of calamities he would gladly avoid. I know how you will come out of the fire, whatever the result. Please comfort Amina on my behalf and tell her it is well with those who have their trust in God whether they remain on earth or whether they are taken away. I know that your brave wife is passing through the ordeal in a manner worthy of her.

I have read Reuter's account of the Khilafat resolution in the Turkish Assembly.[2] I know that the decision must cause deep grief and anxiety to you, the more so as domestic sorrow must have, for the time being, taken up most of your time, but I have always held that, whilst the future of everything rests in the hands of God, the future of Islam rests in the hands of the Mussalmans of India.

Yours ever,
M. K. GANDHI

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 11-3-1924

[1] H. M. Hayat, of Aligarh National University, wrote to Gandhiji on February 28. Amina, Mahomed Ali's daughter, passed away a month later.

[2] This supported the deposition of the Khalifa and abolition of the Khilafat. The Indian Muslim delegation to Angora and the Khalifa had been denied passports.

128. *LETTER TO THE NIZAM OF HYDERABAD*[1]

POONA,
March 5, 1924

YOUR EXALTED HIGHNESS,

I am in receipt of Your Exalted Highness's letter of the 1st instant with reference to your letter to His Excellency the Viceroy in the matter of the Province of Berar.[2] Sir Ali Imam was good enough to send me a copy of his circular letter[3] enclosing a copy of Your Highness's letter. But my illness has prevented me from reading that important document. I am just now attending only to those matters in which I have always been specially interested and in which our people look to me for guidance. I ask Your Highness, therefore, to forgive me for my inability to attend to the question of Berar for the time being.

I remain,
Your Exalted Highness's faithful friend,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 8428

[1] This letter seems to have miscarried; *vide* "Letter to the Nizam of Hyderabad", 5-4-1924.

[2] In this the Nizam had written, *inter alia*: "I have sent an official letter to His Excellency the Viceroy asking the Government of India to restore to me the province of Berar. . . I have promised to grant autonomy to the inhabitants of Berar in case they come under the aegis of my Government as an integral part of the Hyderabad State . . . I am writing to ask whether, on the broad principle of sympathy for the aspirations of mankind in general, and a desire for the amelioration of their condition, you will be able to lend me such support as you can in my present endeavour." S.N. 8424

[3] In this, Sir Ali Imam, who was deputed to England by the Nizam as his counsel, had written: . . . "If real and genuine autonomy is secured to even a small Province of our country, a beginning will have been made of the ultimate realization of the goal that inspires all political groups over the whole of India . . . There is also another aspect of the question and that is the righting of a great wrong that has been done in the past . . . " S.N. 8427

129. *NOTE ON CORRESPONDENCE*[1]

The result of the correspondence was that the Government at last gave their reason for prohibiting the visits referred to, viz., it was in the public interest that the said visits were prohibited, but that, if in future I wanted to see anybody in particular, the Superintendent was to send the name or names to the Government. I may add that to the last moment the names of all who wanted to see me had to be submitted to the Government. In spite of the Government statement, in my case and [in the case of] those who were in the same block with me, the Superintendent had no discretion to grant permission to visitors, which he had in the case of all the other prisoners.

Young India, 6-3-1924

130. *COMMENT ON PRISON CONDITIONS*[2]

For reasons I do not wish to enter into at this stage, I am unable to publish further correspondence in this matter. But I may state that I was permitted to see two of the leading hunger-strikers in the presence of the Superintendent of the Jail and the Inspector-General of Prisons. The result was that Messrs Dastane and Dev, the two prisoners, appreciated the moral argument I advanced, and at once broke their long fast. The Government, after investigating the cause of flogging and surrounding circumstances, issued instructions that no flogging was to be administered by the Jail Superintendent without previous sanction from the Government except in the case of assault by prisoners upon Jail officials, or like conduct. I have observed that exaggerated reports were published about the conduct of Major Whitworth Jones, then Superintendent, and that he was described as an inhumane Superintendent, and his conduct as inhuman. Whilst, in my opinion, the flogging in question was a grave error of judgment on the part of the Superintendent, it was nothing more.

[1] This was published under "Letter to Jail Superintendent, Yeravda", 16-4-1923. The other letters sent by Gandhiji to the Jail authorities are placed in their chronological order.

[2] This was published under "Letter to Jail Superintendent, Yeravda", 29-6-1923.

Major Jones was often hasty, but so far as I am aware never heartless. On the contrary, [in] all I saw of him and heard about him from those prisoners with whom I came in contact, he was a most sympathetic Superintendent, ever willing to listen to the prisoners and to take severe notice of the subordinates who in any way ill-treated them. He was ever willing to admit his mistakes—a rare quality in an official. At the same time he was a disciplinarian, and a hasty disciplinarian is often likely to make mistakes. The two floggings of satyagrahis were such mistakes. They were of the head, not of the heart. The fact is that the powers of indiscriminate flogging should never have been vested in the hands of Superintendents of Jails. They were taken away none too soon. A detailed examination of the prison administration and of these floggings must be reserved for a further occasion.

Young India, 6-3-1924

131. COMMENT ON PRISON REGULATIONS[1]

This letter was written as a result of His Excellency's visit at which I discussed with him, when he pressed me as to whether I had anything to say, the question of Special Division. I told him in effect that, in my opinion, the Special Division Regulations were an eyewash and were designed merely to deceive the public into thinking that something was done to accord to the political prisoners a treatment that their general upbringing rendered necessary. But the Governor told me with the greatest assurance that he had no authority whatsoever in law to bring rigorous-imprisonment prisoners within the Special Division. And when I ventured to question the accuracy of his legal knowledge, he told me he ought to know inasmuch as he had framed the regulations himself. I was amazed at the industry of a Governor who went so much into details as even to draw up regulations—a work that is generally left to legal officers. Although my knowledge of law has become rusty for lack of use, in spite of the authoritative manner in which the Governor spoke, I could not reconcile myself to the fact that the law had given the Government powers to specially classify only simple-imprisonment—and not hard-labour—prisoners, and that it gave no discretion to the Government to

[1] These observations were made by Gandhiji while publishing in *Young India* his "Letter to Governor of Bombay", 15-8-1923.

reduce sentences. Hence the foregoing letter. The reply received was that H.E. was mistaken about the law and that the Government had the necessary powers, but that in spite of that discovery he could not see his way to revise the regulations so as to include all political prisoners, whether undergoing simple or rigorous imprisonment. My suspicion, therefore, that the Special Division Regulations were a mere eyewash became, I am sorry to say, confirmed.

Young India, 6-3-1924

132. COMMENT ON LETTER TO JAIL SUPERINTENDENT, YERAVDA[1]

The reader is warned not to read a meaning into the letter which it was never intended to bear. The letter is only published in order to explain the incident referred to in the letter, as it has been the subject matter of much talk and speculation. And as the renunciation of fruit is said to have hastened my collapse, it is necessary to make it clear that it was in no way a protest against the Superintendent's refusal to grant Mr. Abdul Gani's request. Moreover, Mr. Abdul Gani had the right under the Special Division regulations to send for fruit and any other food that he wanted. But he, Mr. Yagnik and I had come to the conclusion that it would not be proper for us to send for food from outside. The authorities could, therefore, be in no way blamed for the consequence of my abstention. The Superintendent as well as the Inspector-General of Prisons pleaded with me to desist from enforcing my decision. They warned me of the possible serious consequences of abstention, but for the peace of my mind, I had to take the risk. And after all the serious illness I have gone through, I do not feel sorry that I took the step I did. Nor should the reader in any way blame Mr. Abdul Gani for having asked for a change of his diet. He asked for it after full consultation with me, and I approved of the change not knowing that the regulations would not allow the Superintendent to grant the changed diet. I was misled into thinking so because, as stated in the letter, Mr. Yagnik and other fellow-prisoners were allowed by the previous Superintendent to change their diet from time to time. When I decided to renounce fruit after the refusal to Mr. Abdul Gani, he

[1] This was published along with "Letter to Jail Superintendent, Yeravda", 12-11-1923.

tried his utmost to dissuade me from the course, but it was not possible for me to forgo the experiment until it was absolutely clear to me that fruit was necessary for my constitution.

Young India, 6-3-1924

133. MESSAGE TO DELHI PROVINCIAL POLITICAL CONFERENCE[1]

[POONA,
On or before *March 7, 1924*]

Your Conference has no more important work before it than the promotion of Hindu-Moslem unity. It will be like balm to my troubled heart to know that Hindu and Moslem members of the Conference have resolved with God as witness never to distrust each other, but are prepared to die for one another. May God guide you all right.

From a microfilm : S.N. 10366

134. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[Before *March 8, 1924*][2]

BHAISHRI MAHADEV,

I cannot restrain myself from writing to you after reading your letter to Krishnadas. Your complaint is literally true. The questions you have raised did occur to me. But, being an invalid, I could not do more. Having got ready at the last moment, I naturally could not leave instructions. I ought to have given you instructions about the red and green lines. So also about numbers. The numbers were changed twice. You must have, therefore, read two figures, 8622 as 827. I don't remember if it was 8622 or some other number.

Devdas is industrious, but lazy in writing letters. I think one who writes a bad hand is slow to write letters. Pyarelal is a day-dreamer and lacks energy. Krishnadas is still a newcomer and nervous; you cannot take from him any urgent work. In these

[1] The Fourth Delhi Provincial Political Conference was held on March 7 and 8, 1924, at Meerut under the presidentship of Asaf Ali.

[2] This was written before March 8, i.e., the Saturday preceding March 11, when Gandhiji reached Bombay.

circumstances, you have to put up with the discontent prevailing there.

Let me give you the gist of my talk with Motilalji. He remained firm in his view favouring Council-entry, but could not convert me. I too could not convert him. He, Hakimji and the others will come to meet me again in the last week of this month.[1] At present some Sikh leaders are here for consultation. I am having discussions with them. I shall let you know the result after the discussions are over. Andrews, of course, is here. Jairamdas, Rajagopalachari and Shankerlal are also here. In fact, Jairamdas has been here nearly for ten days. I shall probably go to Juhu next Saturday, though it is not definite. My going will depend on the condition of the wound. I do hope you will not publish anything from my letters in the papers. Most probably I shall write to you at least once a week.

Now there are no more Jail letters to be given in *Young India.* I cannot say when I shall be able to write down my experiences [in Jail].

How is Mani? Tell her that, if she keeps on being ill, I shall have to put myself to the trouble of writing to her. She ought to get well even to save me from this labour.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 8443

135. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Saturday [March 8, 1924][2]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

One statement in your letter worries me. You said that, owing to fear of thieves, you have to keep half awake. How long can you carry on like this? If we cannot get a good watchman, we should arrange among ourselves to keep watch by turns. The more essential thing, however, is that we should give up all our jewellery altogether. No one in the Ashram or in the school should have with him even a grain of gold or silver. I was shocked to read Hanumantrao's[3] letter received a couple of days ago. Do you

[1] They met Gandhiji again on March 29. The discussions with Motilal Nehru and other Swarajist leaders lasted several days.

[2] Gandhiji arrived at Juhu on Tuesday, March 11. The preceding Saturday fell on March 8.

[3] Member, Servants of India Society

know what happened to his wife? Read the letter I am enclosing. No wonder if a similar thing occurs in the Ashram. One needs no ornament for the ear. For the wrists one may have very pretty shell-bangles. We should reduce, as much as possible, our other possessions too and live without fear, and not worry if these things are stolen. We should also approach people in the neighbouring villages. You have already done this. You may speak to them again if you think that necessary. All the three courses—watch, reducing of possessions and appeals to the villages—should be adopted simultaneously.

Please let me know in Juhu about Radha's[1] health. I intend sending for her there if circumstances permit and if she can undertake the journey.

Ramdas is much unsettled in mind. He is very unhappy. Take him under your care. Let him have your sympathy without talking about the cause of his suffering. Ask Surendra or someone else who has the time to keep him company. If he does not go there on some work, please invite him to do so. This is only a suggestion. Do what you can in the circumstances there.

I shall most probably reach Juhu on Tuesday. The wound is still bleeding a little.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 6042. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

136. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[After *March 8, 1924*][2]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

1. Please write to the *Mahajan* about the dogs if you have not yet done so.
2. Consult the watchman about the thefts.
3. Think over the suggestion about someone going to the neighbouring villages.
4. Just as attending prayers is compulsory, so too is coming to the dining-room at 10.45.

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 6043. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

[1] Addressee's daughter

[2] Presumably, this was written as a reminder to the preceding item dated March 8, 1924.

137. *ADVICE TO AKALIS*[1]

[*March 9, 1924*][2]

1. In my opinion, in order to bring the whole of the Akali movement to a successful issue, it is absolutely necessary that their minimum should be unmistakably stated. This alone can evoke universal approval and sympathy, provided that the minimum is just and reasonable in the sense that it appeals to the reason of a common-sense, godfearing man. It will not, therefore, do to say that a particular claim is a religious claim. All religious claims must necessarily appeal to reason.

In a movement of non-violence, the minimum is also the maximum, just as the minimum is not capable of reduction even though the difficulties may be insurmountable, similarly under favourable weather, there can be no addition to the minimum.

This follows from the fact that non-violence includes truth and truth admits of no expedients.

2. It is, therefore, necessary for the S.G.P.C. to state the implications of the Gurdwara movement, i.e., which gurdwaras are claimed by the Akalis to be historical or otherwise falling within the movement and without which an Akali, to be true to his faith, may not rest. Second, what are the implications with reference to the present *Akhand Path* affair in the Gangsar Gurdwara.[3]

Third, what is the movement in connection with the forced abdication or deposition of the Maharaja of Nabha.

3. In my opinion, with reference to the gurdwaras, the mode of procedure should be, in the case of disputed possession, (i) through private impartial arbitration without reference to or intervention of the present courts of law; (ii) where the opposite party refuses to submit to reason or arbitration, by satyagraha, i.e., non-violent mode of asserting S.G.P.C.'s right to possession. In order that the method is and remains strictly non-violent throughout, it is

[1] An Akali deputation, headed by Sardar Mangal Singh, held week-long discussions with Gandhiji at Poona. Gandhiji recorded these views himself.

[2] The source carried, at the end, a paragraph which forms a part of the following item bearing this date. It appears that both the items are of the same date.

[3] Recitation from the Granth Saheb had been going on at Gangsar Gurdwara near Jaiton since October 1923. Every day a batch of 25 Sikhs was sent to the Gurdwara for the reading of Granth Saheb and was promptly arrested.

not enough that there is absence of active violence, but it is necessary that there is not the slightest show of force.

It follows, therefore, that a large body of men cannot be deputed to assert the right of S.G.P.C.'s possession, but one or at the most two men of undoubted integrity, spiritual force and humility may be deputed to assert the right. The result of this is likely to be the martyrdom of these pioneers. My conviction is that from that moment the possession of the Committee is assured, but it may so happen that martyrdom is postponed and intermediate stages such as pinpricks, serious assault or imprisonment might have to be suffered. In that case and in every case till actual control is secured, there must be a ceaseless stream of devotees in single or double file visiting the gurdwara in assertion of the right of the Committee. It is hardly necessary for me to point out that, if the possessor for the time being may consent to submit to arbitration, the Committee should be ever ready to accept the offer when the asserting of the right by means of satyagraha ceases. In such a case, it goes without saying that if there are any of the devotees who have been imprisoned in prosecution of the object of the Committee, they should be discharged simultaneously with the acceptance of the arbitration.

NABHA

I understand the position regarding the Nabha State to be as follows—and as explained by the Akali friends who have been kindly sent by the S.G.P.C. for the purpose :

1. The S.G.P.C. contends that the Maharaja has been forced to abdicate, that there is no sufficient warrant for the step and that the Committee is in a position to prove that the Maharaja has been forced to abdicate not because of the charges vaguely referred to by the Viceroy or of any other charges such as would justify the extreme punishment, but for his public-spiritedness exhibited on several occasions and for his known active sympathy for the Akali cause. The Committee invites an open and impartial enquiry by a competent authority into the whole case before which the S.G.P.C. should have the right to give evidence and the Committee would be satisfied with the findings of such an enquiry. It has been suggested that the Nabha Maharaja has voluntarily abdicated in consideration for the Government suppressing certain charges which they hold are of an extremely damnatory character. If the Maharaja's own writing can be produced in proof of the statement, the Committee will naturally have nothing further to say. Such a writing should be given by the Maharaja without any veiled pressure

from the Government and should be a fresh document. The Committee have no desire at present for any direct action. At the same time, it is but fair to say that if all the efforts at impartial enquiry for obtaining strict justice fail and when the public have been put in possession of all the facts known to the Committee and public opinion has been fully matured and cultivated, the Committee may be reluctantly compelled as a matter of honour and chivalry to resort to direct action. No mention, however, of direct action will be made in any manifesto stating the Committee's position regarding Nabha that may be issued by the Committee.

The above position appears to me to be unexceptionable and I heartily endorse it.

Shahidi Jatha

Had it been possible for me to have met the Akali friends before the Jatha which is now on its way to Jaiton had started, I would, even after having heard all that the friends had to say, have adhered to my advice that it should not be sent before perfect stock-taking and a review of the whole situation, but I wish to cast no blame on anyone for the delay in the friends meeting me or, if there is any blame to be attached to anybody, I must take it upon my own shoulders, because I omitted to take the precaution of wiring the full text of my message to S.G.P.C. at the same time that I handed it to the representative of the Associated Press. I was under the mistaken belief that Press messages having precedence of private messages the A.P. message would be earlier in the hands of the Committee. I foolishly wanted to save public money. Could I be present in the Punjab and see things face to face, I would not hesitate, even though the Jatha is nearing its destination, to tender my advice for its recall in order to enable us to review the situation, to take certain steps which I hold are necessary before taking further direct action, but I cannot undertake the responsibility, lying on a sick-bed, of advising the recall. I dare not place such a burden on the friends who have come to discuss the Gurdwara affair with me. In the circumstances, therefore, I fear that the Jatha must be allowed to proceed to its destination. I understand that elaborate precautions have been taken to prevent admiring crowds or others from following or accompanying the Jatha. I understand too that strictest instructions have been issued to the Jatha to adopt and continue a perfectly non-violent attitude in spite of the gravest provocation. This is all to the good.

But I understand further that the Jatha has also been instructed, in the event of its receiving orders, to leave the State boundary to

disobey and, arm in arm, the Jatha has been instructed to present a solid living wall to the State soldiery and to draw upon their devoted heads with unflinching courage the fire that can be poured upon them. The idea is no longer to submit to pinpricks and prolongation of the agony by way of forcible deportation, but to end it by every member of the Jatha sitting at his post and dying there with calm resignation without any retaliation. This plan is conceived in a most lofty and daring spirit. The bravery of those who conceived it and still greater bravery of those who are expected to carry it out in its entirety cannot be questioned and, if the Nabha authorities are so foolish as to fire upon the Jatha till everyone lies dead at his post, it will certainly stagger humanity, thrill the world, and command universal applause for matchless heroism, but I am sorry to say it could not be recorded as an act of non-violence. This proposed action can be described as civil disobedience, but in reality it would not be civil disobedience, for civil disobedience [is] perfect submission to orders which are given as punishments for the breach of primary orders which a civil resister holds against conscience to obey. But such disobedience to be civil requires perfect obedience to sanctions small or great, and disobedience of smaller sanctions in order to invite larger sanctions is not civil but is rowdy and therefore violent. The faith of the civil resister must be a living faith in the ultimate success of the spirit of suffering and forbearance. Infinite patience must, therefore, be our badge.

Let us now apply this principle to the proposed action: to sit tight in the face of an order of deportation or an imprisonment in order to invite shooting is to avoid the intermediate sanctions and the possibilities of prolongation of slow suffering and also the struggle. Such avoidance is not permissible in civil disobedience; it is calculated to give an excuse to the opponent that they are not non-violent. The natural course would be to obey the order of deportation when it is accompanied by physical force, be it ever so slight. Therefore, even if a youngster duly authorized came to enforce the order of deportation, 500 strong men would in honour be bound meekly and joyously to march out with a young deporting officer whom by the heroic forbearance the 500 are likely to convert into a friend. Once put across the border, the right of marching back and be treated similarly or worse accrues to the 500. The idea underlying meek suffering is that ultimately it is bound to melt the stoniest heart. It further deprives disobedience of the slightest trace of violence either active or passive.

I wish to analyse the proposed action still further. What is

the locking up of arms of the whole Jatha, if it is not passive violence? It is clear that such a solid wall cannot be broken by one man, whereas the creed of non-violence presupposes that a move of violence by the opponent is enough for him to push back a crowd of 20,000 non-violent men.

If, therefore, the Committee accept all the implications of non-violence, I am firmly of opinion, instructions already given as to the action to be taken by the Jatha when it comes in conflict with authority should be revised in terms of what I have sketched above. In that event, only one or the other thing can happen, either the 500 will be deported or imprisoned. But, in both the cases, the act will have been performed with complete meekness on our side. I know the difficulties of following the procedure. The authorities may endlessly continue the seesaw business in order to tire us out. But this difficulty vanishes if we, as a body, claim to be incapable of being tired out. Non-violence, depending as it does on an unquenchable faith in God and in the persistence only of that which is good, does not know what it is to be defeated or to be tired out. If the plan suggested by me is adopted, any number of men may march in and at any time of the day. It will be found in practice that no authority can possibly afford to play the game of seesaw with a people so determined. So much regarding the Jatha now on the march. When the present manœuvre is finished, I would suggest a review of the whole situation. So far as I know, the aim of the *Akhand Path* movement is to assert the right of the community to have *Akhand Path* in the place [of] that which was interrupted on the. . .[1] and to vindicate the right to have the *Akhand Path* as often as the community considers it necessary. The authorities state that they do not wish to prevent the *Akhand Path* ceremony, but they will not allow under its cover the massing of a large number of Sikhs from outside who may carry on open or secret propaganda regarding the Nabha Maharaja and thus create and keep up the ferment in the State. In order to meet this objection, I would advise the Committee to make a declaration in the clearest possible terms that the object of the Jatha is purely to assert the aforementioned right, that it has no desire to carry on, under cover of the *Akhand Path* ceremony, any political propaganda in the Nabha State, whilst the Committee in no way binds itself to refrain from pressing forward the claims of the Nabha Maharaja and agitating for the Nabha question. But that agitation will stand

[1] The date is not given in the source. It is, however, likely that this is February 21, 1924; *vide* "Open Letter to Akalis", 25-2-1924.

n its merits and will have no connection with the *Akhand Path* ffair. The Committee will also in that case be satisfied with ending a Jatha of 25 without in any way admitting the right of ıe State to limit the number. It would be purely a voluntary ct with a view to disarming suspicion.

But if my advice is accepted, for the time being no Jatha will e despatched, but negotiations should be by a third party with the tate authorities with a view to clearing away misunderstanding nd removing the deadlock.[1]

If, then, the sending of a Jatha of 500 is suspended for the ime being and the declaration sketched above is made, it opens he way for a third party to negotiate with the authorities with view to removing the deadlock.

GURDWARA REFORM MOVEMENT

In connection with the Gurdwara movement I am asked to state the procedure that, in my opinion, should be adopted prior to the direct action sketched in the foregoing notes. The first thing is to state the case fully and publicly as to the conditions of the Gurdwara's mismanagement, e.g., character of the occupant, etc., or notices should also be served on the occupant stating the position of the Committee and asking him to submit to its jurisdiction and control, and informing him that, in the event of his wishing to contest the Committee's possession, the latter would be willing to submit the case to arbitration. The names of the arbitrator or arbitrators on behalf of the Committee should be given in the notice and, in the event of the occupant ignoring the notice or declining to submit to arbitration, the Committee would be free to take direct action.[1]

With reference to the Gurdwaras already possessed by the S.G.P.C., as a matter of truth and justice, I am convinced that, if the party dispossessed disputes this right of the S.G.P.C. to the possession, the Committee should be ready [to] have the matter reopened and settled by arbitration. But I recognize that it would be dangerous and detrimental to the best interest of the Committee to make any such public announcement at the present moment and whilst the Government is trying its best to injure the Committee and in every way interfere with its activity. With reference to the Gurdwaras claimed to be historical, the only thing, so far as I can see, the Committee can be reasonably expected to do is to prove the historical nature and, if it satisfies the arbitration

[1] In the source, the following footnotes are given to this paragraph: 1. "Truth and non-violence," and 2. "A word to Pandit Malaviya."

regarding it, its possession must rest with or rest in the Committee without any further proof being necessary regarding any other matter.[1]

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3769

138. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS[2]

POONA,
[March 9, 1924]

I had long and cordial conversations with the Akali friends. In the course of the conversations, I tendered to them my opinion on the several matters under discussion. The public will not expect me to divulge the matters discussed between us or the opinion given by me, but I am free to state this, that the Akali friends told me that my letter was not received by the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee with apathy, and they satisfied me that, under the circumstances, it gave it all the consideration. Unfortunately, my letter was seen by them in the Press so late that they were unable to do more than they did in the matter.[3] My friends informed me to my surprise that there was a general misapprehension in the Punjab that, after the Nankana tragedy I had expressed an opinion that the Gurdwara movement should have been postponed till after the attainment of swarajya and that my recent letter was intended to renew that opinion. I never once expressed the opinion attributed to me, as can be amply verified from my writings and speeches of the time. My recent letter[4] was merely an advice to suspend and not necessarily to stop altogether the sending of the then impending Shahidi Jatha till after deliberation with a Committee of non-Sikh friends, and full introspection and searching of the heart.

From photostats: G.N. 3768 and 3769; also *The Bombay Chronicle*, 11-3-1924

[1] In the source here follows a paragraph which forms part of G.N. 3768; *vide* the following item.

[2] Gandhiji made this statement to the representative of the Associated Press who called on him to ascertain the result of the week-long discussions between him and the Akali deputation led by Sardar Mangal Singh in regard to Akali activities.

[3] The text that follows is also available from a handwritten, signed draft, dated March 9. G.N. 3768

[4] *Vide* "Open Letter to Akalis", 25-2-1924.

139. TELEGRAM TO KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA

[Before *March 10, 1924*][1]

SRIRAMULU[2] FASTING AT NELLORE UNDER MY ADVICE FOR OPENING A TEMPLE TO HARIJANS. PLEASE GO IF PHYSICALLY ABLE OR SEND SOMEONE AND DO WHAT IS PROPER. I HAVE CONFLICTING WIRES.[3] WIRE POONA.

From a photostat: 117A

140. MESSAGE TO KHADI EXHIBITION, BOMBAY[4]

March 10, 1924

It is beyond doubt that exhibitions of pure khadi are very useful in propagating khadi. But how strange it is that we still have to hold khadi exhibitions! If anyone talks of holding an exhibition to propagate our country's wheat and *bajra*, we consider him an idiot. Is khadi, then, less useful than wheat and *bajra*? If we do not wish to eat oats imported from Scotland in place of our wheat and *bajra*, why do we then insult khadi by importing and wearing cloth from Manchester or Japan? Every patriot and everyone who loves his or her religion must consider this point. We shall surely remain under foreign rule as long as we cannot do without foreign cloth. It is strange that complicated arguments appeal to us rather than this simple one. And until we all learn to take to the royal road of khadi, hand-woven from hand-spun yarn, we have to continue holding khadi exhibitions. Hence I wish all success to the exhibition at Mandvi.

[From Gujarati]
Gujarati, 16-3-1924

[1] This telegram was evidently sent from Poona before March 10 when Gandhiji left for Bombay.

[2] Potti Sriramulu Naidu, once an inmate of Sabarmati Ashram, started his fast on March 7 for securing Harijans' entry to the Venugopalaswami Temple at Mulapet. In 1952, he fasted unto death in connection with the formation of an Andhra State.

[3] Earlier, a Press report had described Sriramulu's condition as weak, and stated that the managing trustee of the temple had tried to persuade him to break the fast on the assurance that he would try and induce his co-trustees to throw the temple open to Harijans.

[4] Read out by Kasturba Gandhi after declaring open the exhibition at Mandvi, Bombay

141. FAREWELL SPEECH, POONA[1]

March 10, 1924

In making a speech, I am respectfully disregarding Col. Maddock's instructions. But if I did not speak, I would be doing him an injustice. Ever since he was sent by Government to examine me in Yeravda Jail, Col. Maddock has become my friend. I was reluctant to have an operation, but was so impressed by him that I had to trust him completely. I have full faith in his skill. Of course, it is not for me to give him a testimonial, but the fact of his skill remains. I hope Col. Maddock will devote his leisure hours to the cause of humanity wherever he goes.

Non-violent non-co-operation means goodwill and sympathy towards everyone. I would feel pained if I heard it said that I had ill will towards any person. The pain would persist even after my death. I thank all those who have helped me. You have assured me that you will wear swadeshi clothes. This assurance gives me great pleasure. Swadeshi does not mean ill will towards anybody. May God grant long life and prosperity to Col. and Mrs. Maddock wherever they may be.

[From Gujarati]
Gujarati, 16-3-1924

142. TELEGRAM TO GHANSHYAM JETHANAND[2]

[On or after *March 10, 1924*]

PLEASE CONVEY LATE MR. BHURGRI'S FAMILY RESPECTFUL CONDOLENCES. INDIA HAS LOST IN HIM SINCERE PATRIOT.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 8466

[1] Delivered before the students of the B. J. Medical School, Col. Maddock and other members of the Hospital staff who had met to bid farewell to Gandhiji

[2] This was in reply to Ghanshyam Jethanand's telegram to Jairamdas Doulatram, dated March 10, 1924, which read: "Bhurgri expired last night."

143. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA[1]

[After *March 11, 1924*][2]

Keep your body fit. Then only can I take sufficient work from you and give you some more still.

Take milk at least for fifteen days, if you think you need it. Eat fruit, *roti* will do you harm. Take curds without fail.

Your pronunciation is no doubt bad, but do not worry much over that. English is not our language. The way the French pronounce [it] is very bad, but no Englishman ever complains about it.

From the Hindi original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 5999. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

144. INTERVIEW TO "STEAD'S REVIEW"

[After *March 11, 1924*][3]

I begged Gandhi to continue his simple meal, tended by an Indian nurse, and he munched an orange while he talked. People came and went silently all the time. Admiring countrymen who flocked to Andheri—often at great inconvenience and expense—to behold their revered leader, made obeisance and withdrew. Others who listened at a respectful distance drank in every word that fell from his lips, fervent approval shining in their dark eyes. Yet though the audience gradually swelled to quite fifty, our conversation was never interrupted by so much as a cough. Thus was the naturally loquacious Indian overawed by the presence of his venerated Mahatma.

"Mr. Gandhi," I said, "I am going to ask you ten questions. You will, of course, reply or decline to answer at your will. Now, why do you make

[1] Ghanshyam Das Birla; industrialist and philanthropist who gave financial assistance for Gandhiji's schemes of social welfare; member, Second Round Table Conference, 1931

[2] This is the earliest available letter to G. D. Birla. Its exact date is not ascertainable. It is, however, likely that it was written from Bombay. Gandhiji arrived at Juhu, a sea-side suburb of Bombay, on March 11 and stayed there till May 28 to recoup his health. This and the several letters that follow were written from Juhu during this period, though some of them carry the postal address: Andheri, another neighbouring suburb.

[3] The exact date of this interview is not available. It took place at Juhu, Bombay, some time after March 11, 1924.

such a feature of preaching home-spinning to Indians? Is it because you hold that India's economic dependence contributes to its political dependence?" Gandhi declared without hesitation:

Absolutely, when Indians were spinning and weaving their own cotton, they were well off and happy. From the day on which they attempted to sell their cotton to Lancashire, and buy their cloth from Lancashire, they have become increasingly lazy and poor, 85 per cent of India's population loafs now for 4 months in the year. Foreign cloth has made a nation of idlers and beggars. The charkha (spinning-wheel) will restore to the villager not only prosperity, but also self-respect and hope. For the last fifty years Indians have been losing hope. The charkha is a symbol of a new life which will save them from despair.

Then you put home-spinning even above the crying need of elementary education of your masses?

Why should I wait for my country to be educated in the European sense, before saving it from starvation? Do you know that at least one-third of our 350,000,000 are chronically underfed? They want bread and butter before education. Besides, it is open to question whether Western education would benefit Indians any way. We were happy and prosperous in the old days, without education. We are wretched and poor today, amidst all the vaunted blessings of English civilization. No, I find no difficulty in spreading my gospel of the charkha through lack of understanding. The illiterate villagers welcome the spinning-wheel like a ray of heavenly hope. It is the shortage of trained instructors which hampers our propaganda.

I asked Mr. Gandhi whether he considered the Indian masses ripe for Home Rule.

Certainly, for that kind of Home Rule which I understand under swaraj. But nobody, not even the English people, can "give" us swaraj. We can only give it to ourselves. Home Rule, on the pattern of the Australian or Canadian constitutions, is not swaraj. Still, it will be infinitely superior to our present state of servitude. If Britain is unwilling to give to us complete independence, I would welcome and accept Home Rule. And I say India is certainly able to enter the British community of nations on that footing.

What is your answer to the generally accepted theory of the advocates of the present political system that India could not rule herself because of the

irreconcilable differences of her castes, religions and tribes? Mr. Gandhi smiled.

Of course, there are differences. No nation is without them. The United Kingdom was born amidst the Wars of the Roses. Probably we, too, shall fight. But, when we are tired of breaking each other's heads, we shall discover that, despite the disparities of our races and religions, we can live together, just as the Scotch and Welsh manage to live together. The gravest of India's admitted abuses and prejudices, such as that fatal theory of untouchability of certain Hindu castes, will disappear when the people are emancipated.

Would Indian Home Rule give universal suffrage to the masses?

Practically. I mean that every citizen desirous of vote would get a vote. I do not see the use of compulsory enrolment without compulsory voting. Votes of people who must be driven to the poll are of questionable value. My idea is to open enrolling depots all over the country where those desiring to vote can register their names on payment of a small fee—just enough to make the voting machinery self-supporting. I am convinced that we shall obtain in this way popular mandates as intelligent as in any other country.

Is there not this danger, in a country like India, that released from British restraint, the small intelligentsia of Bengalis, Brahmins, etc., might seize the reins of Government to their own aggrandizement, and the utter enslavement of their ignorant countrymen? Such things, as you are aware, were not unknown in the history of India.

But what makes you anticipate them in these days? What power could such usurpers command today to enslave the people? They would have no army, none of the impregnable entrenchment of the English in this country. Why, if any Indians tried to enslave the people, they would tear them to pieces.

Next to homespinning, Mr. Gandhi, what do you counsel your countrymen to do to attain swaraj?

We must get rid of the unsympathetic domination by a foreign people who only come here to drain our wealth. I have nothing against the English individually. They probably treat us as well as any other foreign nation would. Of course, there are many minor irritations, inseparable from foreign rule. But our greatest grievance against the English is that they have steadily impoverished India. If Englishmen living in India became loyal, useful citizens

of this country, as they became in Australia or South Africa, I should welcome them as my brothers. But they only come here to exploit my people, and to draw the substance from the land. After a century of this steady drain, we are nearing exhaustion. We must either stop this drain, or lose the last traces of our one-time greatness and culture. That is why I ask the English to go away. I am certain we can force them to go, by non-co-operation, without violence. The English may pass laws, but they cannot force us to obey them. They may prescribe taxes, but they can compel only comparatively few to pay them. Non-co-operation and non-violence are more potent weapons than guns.

Still, guns have their uses. Mr. Gandhi, you may deprecate them because they are not at your disposal. If you had arms, would you consider yourself justified in using them to drive out the English?

Heaven forbid! Contemplate the carnage and misery wrought by the small nations of Europe during the late War, and then, imagine the terrible consequences of 30 crores of Indians seizing arms! Besides, force never settles one single problem. Behold the present plight of Europe after such a "settlement" by force! We have no right to use force even against our oppressors; but it is our duty to refuse to help them to oppress us further. That is why we must not co-operate with the English till they co-operate with us.

You have studied and travelled much, Mr. Gandhi, and must admit that India would have fared worse under any but British rule, that England has shown much patience and forbearance under many provocations. What more would you have the English do?

The whole of our demands can be compressed into one word, Retire! And if you are not yet willing to retire completely, give us at least the autonomy of your self-governing dominions. We have enough common sense to prefer the half loaf to no bread at all. But if we are to join the family of British nations, we demand a say, not only in our own affairs, but in those of the whole Empire, in proportion to our population. In other words, we shall expect the centre of Imperial interests to be shifted to India, as its most populous component. Any member of the Empire objecting to this change would have the remedy of leaving the Commonwealth of British nations.

As a man of the world you realize that the English are not likely to relinquish, at your mere bidding, their enormous interests, material and political,

which they have built up in India by so much labour and sacrifice. How do you picture to yourself the practical fulfilment of your aims? Do you believe that your own efforts, or outside pressure, will eventually bring about your liberation?

Our own efforts can and will end any foreign rule. If all my people understood and practised the true doctrine of non-co-operation and non-violence, we should have swaraj tomorrow. It would descend to us as from Heaven. Indians being frail, like other mortals, we shall have to wait. But our lesson is going home to the remotest villages, and every spinning-wheel that hums in a mud cottage is bringing us nearer our inevitable liberation.

One question more. How do you view Australia's virtual embargo against Asiatics?

I cannot understand this short-sighted policy of a nation which I otherwise admire. It is bad on economic, ethical and political grounds. But I admit that I have not given much attention to Australia's problems. I am too much engrossed in Indian affairs. Therefore, I would not like to express more than my personal, unauthoritative opinion on a question which I have not studied.[1]

The Searchlight, 27-6-1924

145. LETTER TO MRS. MADDOCK

POST ANDHERI,
March 14, 1924

DEAR MRS. MADDOCK[2],

Here is a brief statement of my activities as per my promise :

(1) Removal of the curse of untouchability among the Hindus.

(2) The spread of hand-spinning and hand-weaving and the advocacy of the use of hand-spun and hand-woven cloth to the exclusion of all foreign cloth and even cloth woven in Indian mills.

(3) Advocacy of simple life and, therefore, of the avoidance of intoxicating drinks and drugs.

[1] The report of the interview concludes : "This subtle defence precluded any discussion on a controversial subject. . . Gandhi was visibly tired . . . So I wished my courteous informant speedy recovery to complete health, shook hands, and went to ponder over this old new message of non-violence . . . "

[2] Wife of Col. C. Maddock

(4) The establishment of unaided national schools both for the purpose of weaning students from Government institutions as a part of the Non-co-operation struggle, and of introducing education, including industrial training, in keeping with the national problems.

(5) The promotion of unity amongst Hindus, Mussulmans, Christians, Parsees, Jews, etc.

I carry on these activities through two institutions. The first is an Ashram near Ahmedabad established in 1916[1] where all those who desire to work out these ideals are invited to join. Its expenses are defrayed out of private contributions made by monied friends who are interested in the activities named. It has at the present moment nearly 100 inmates, both male and female, who include several families from the so-called untouchable class. There is a carding, spinning and weaving school and an ordinary literary school attached to the Ashram. Simple agricultural work also is done there, and an attempt is being made to grow our own cotton.

The second institution is the National Congress which is a vast political organization with a very simple but, in my opinion, perfect constitution. This has adopted practically the whole of the foregoing programme. It has branches in every part of India and has thousands of members who elect representatives annually. Payment of 4 annas and acceptance of the Congress creed entitle an adult male or female to the membership of the Congress and to vote for the election of delegates. The Congress naturally has a larger programme of work than the activities above-named, and being a representative body, has no permanent programme, but can change it from year to year. Its aim is the attainment of swarajya, that is, self-government, by peaceful and legitimate means. For the last four years it has sought to attain its end by non-violent non-co-operation with the Government.

My own motive is to put forth all my energy in an attempt to save Indian, that is, ancient culture, from impending destruction by modern, that is, Western culture being imposed upon India. The essence of ancient culture is based upon the practice of the utmost non-violence. Its motto is the good of all including every living thing, whereas Western culture is frankly based upon violence. It, therefore, does not respect all life and, in its progress onward, it has

[1] This is a slip. The reference is to the Satyagraha Ashram founded at Kochrab, near Ahmedabad, on May 20, 1915, and shifted, on the outbreak of plague in 1917, to Sabarmati.

not hesitated to resort to wholesale destruction of even human life. Its motto is: Might is Right, and it is essentially individualistic. This does not mean that there is nothing for India to learn from the West, for in spite of the acceptance by the West of the Doctrine of Might is Right, the human touch has not altogether disappeared in the West. The relentless pursuit of a false ideal conceived as truth has opened the eyes of numerous men in the West to the falsity of that ideal. I would like India to copy that spirit of search for the truth in the place of being satisfied with tradition without question, but India can safely copy nothing before she has come to her own and realized that her culture has a very important place in the universe and it must be defended at all costs. The importation of Western culture by the British in India has meant exploitation of her resources for the supposed benefit of Great Britain. It has brought millions of people to the verge of starvation, and it has almost emasculated a whole nation.

The foregoing programme is an attempt to prevent the impending ruin not by Western methods but by Indian methods, namely, by internal reform and self-purification from the very bottom. To remove the curse of untouchability is to do penance for the sin committed by the Hindus of degrading a fifth of their own religionists. To remove the curse of intoxicating drinks and drugs not only purifies the nation, but it also deprives an immoral system of Government of an immoral source of revenue to the extent of nearly 25 crores of rupees. To revive hand-spinning and hand-weaving brings back to millions of cottages of India their supplementary industry, revives the old Indian art, removes the degrading pauperism and provides an automatic insurance against famine. At the same time, it deprives Great Britain of the strongest incentive for Indian exploitation, for if India can clothe herself without importing foreign cloth and foreign machinery, the relations between Great Britain and India become natural and almost idealistic. They take the form then of a voluntary partnership resulting in mutual benefit and, probably, benefit to mankind in general. Unity between the different religionists of India prevents Great Britain from pursuing the immoral policy of Divide and Rule, and the practice of non-violence in resisting exploitation and degradation, if it becomes successful, is likely to serve as an example for the whole world to copy.

In following out the programme, mistakes and miscalculations have undoubtedly been made. Regrettable incidents have also taken place, but I make bold to say that no movement in which millions of people have taken part has yet taken place with so

little bloodshed or interruption of the ordinary activities of the people.[1]

I do not know whether I have succeeded in giving you what you wanted. I have endeavoured to be as brief as it was possible.

Please tell Col. Maddock that it was not without grief that I left the hospital. I shall always remember the tender care and attention bestowed by him upon me. I appreciate the gift of his portrait. My very best wishes will accompany you during your voyage and stay at home. I shall prize a line from you or him whenever you think of me and have the time for writing. The place in which I am housed is most delightful. The sea is in front of me. The bungalow is surrounded with the cocoanut palm. The nights are very cool, and generally there is a gentle breeze all the day long. Mr. Andrews and I take a walk along the beautiful sandy beach in Juhu for about half an hour. I fancy that I shall gain strength day by day.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

[PS.]

My permanent address is Sabarmati, near Ahmedabad.

MRS. MADDOCK
POONA

From a photostat: S.N. 8488

146. *STATEMENT ON POTTI SRIRAMULU'S FAST*

BOMBAY,
March 15, 1924

Shri Sriramulu is an unknown poor Congressman and servant of humanity working in Nellore. He has been labouring single-

[1] C. F. Andrews released this part of the letter as a statement in the *Manchester Guardian*, 24-4-1924, with the following observations, *inter alia*: ". . . This is, I believe, the first concise statement of his aims made by Mahatma Gandhi himself that will have appeared in the English Press. . . It will come with a surprise to most people because of its economic rather than political character. The truth is not yet realized in England that what is being aimed at by Mr. Gandhi is a revolution far more radical than any mere refusal to enter the Reformed Councils. . . . It appears to have hidden from view the far deeper and more penetrating change of social and economic life which is making India a new country, a country that will not merely be a dreary repetition of the dullness and drabness of the West." *The Searchlight*, 18-5-1924

handed for the cause of the Harijans of that place. There was a time when high hope was entertained about removal of untouchability and other social work in Nellore. An ashram was built near Nellore, but for a variety of causes the activity received a setback. Desabhakta Konda Venkatappayya was, and still is, though very old, the moving spirit in connection with these activities. It is in this place that Shri Sriramulu has been quietly and persistently working for the removal, root and branch, of untouchability.

He has been trying to have a temple opened to Harijans. He asked me the other day whether, in order to awaken public conscience in favour of such opening, he could, if all other efforts failed, undertake a fast. I sent him my approval.

Now the place is astir. But some persons have asked me to advise Shri Sriramulu to suspend his fast for removing legal difficulties of which I have no knowledge. I have been unable to give such advice.

As I am anxious that an unobtrusive servant of humanity may not die for want of public knowledge and support, I bespeak the interest of the journalists of the South, if not of all India, to find out for themselves the truth of the matter and, if what I say is borne out by facts, shame by public exposure the opposing parties into doing the right and save a precious life.

From a photostat: 117A

147. *LETTER TO ERVIN BAKTAY*

POST ANDHERI,
March 15, 1924

DEAR FRIEND,

I was very glad indeed to receive your letter[1] of the 8th February.

[1] In the course of his letter Ervin Baktay had written: " . . . there are men very far away from India who have faith in your person and your work. I believe that the work which is done by you has a great importance for the whole humanity; the West does not understand it clearly today what your work represents in human history, yet it can be observed that there are many in the West who have a clear or a less distinct feeling about it. . . . Even in England and France or America there are men who understood that the Western way of solving great problems by everlasting wars cannot lead but to a general ruin. And the whole world begins to listen more and more to India's message for mankind and this message is yours. Since several years I study Indian religion,

It pleases me to think that the humble work I am doing in my own country is being understood and appreciated in Europe and more so by those who, like my own people, are labouring under oppression. Though my activity is confined to India, I do share with you the belief that the means being adopted in India with non-violence as the corner-stone are of universal application in like circumstances, and if we achieve our true freedom demonstrably by non-violent means, the rest of the world will have no difficulty in putting faith in the invincibility of non-violence in every walk of life.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

ERVIN BAKTAY, ESQ.
11 MESR. UTEA 12
BUDAPEST
(HUNGARY)

From the photostats: G.N. 2831 and S.N. 8493

148. LETTER TO A. A. VOYSEY

POST ANDHERI,
March 15, 1924

DEAR MR. VOYSEY,

I thank you for your letter of the 14th February.

You will be glad to know that the wound has healed completely and that I am now having my convalescence at a seaside retreat. I shall look forward to the further letter[1] which you

philosophy and literature, and I have the conviction that India's thought has a very great importance for humanity. I believe that Rabindranath Tagore was right in saying: 'the greatest event of our age was the meeting of East and West in India.' Yes, India will pour fresh water into our dried-out wells, for our wells which were once filled to the brim by another holy water (Christ's message) were abandoned by us. Truth is but *one* and the truth in the message of the Upanishads, of Buddha, or Christ cannot be different. The words and the forms can differ, but the living essence is the same. And there is nobody in this world today whose words and deeds could better express this truth than yours. In you I see the personification of all truth which was ever given to mankind." S.N. 8303

[1] In this Voysey wrote of "a special aspect of human progress which engages my thoughts and which you may feel has some bearing on your work in India, though your work is truly a world work and for all humanity. Blessed and happy are you." S.N. 8329

handed for the cause of the Harijans of that place. There was a time when high hope was entertained about removal of untouchability and other social work in Nellore. An ashram was built near Nellore, but for a variety of causes the activity received a setback. Desabhakta Konda Venkatappayya was, and still is, though very old, the moving spirit in connection with these activities. It is in this place that Shri Sriramulu has been quietly and persistently working for the removal, root and branch, of untouchability.

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It pleases me to think that the humble work I am doing in my own country is being understood and appreciated in Europe and more so by those who, like my own people, are labouring under oppression. Though my activity is confined to India, I do share with you the belief that the means being adopted in India with non-violence as the corner-stone are of universal application in like circumstances, and if we achieve our true freedom demonstrably by non-violent means, the rest of the world will have no difficulty in putting faith in the invincibility of non-violence in every walk of life.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

ERVIN BAKTAY, ESQ.
11 MESR. UTEA 12
BUDAPEST
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From the photostats: G.N. 2831 and S.N. 8493

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DEAR MR. VOYSEY,

I thank you for your letter of the 14th February.

You will be glad to know that the wound has healed completely and that I am now having my convalescence at a seaside retreat. I shall look forward to the further letter[1] which you

---

philosophy and literature, and I have the conviction that India's thought has a very great importance for humanity. I believe that Rabindranath Tagore was right in saying: 'the greatest event of our age was the meeting of East and West in India.' Yes, India will pour fresh water into our dried-out wells, for our wells which were once filled to the brim by another holy water (Christ's message) were abandoned by us. Truth is but *one* and the truth in the message of the Upanishads, of Buddha, or Christ cannot be different. The words and the forms can differ, but the living essence is the same. And there is nobody in this world today whose words and deeds could better express this truth than yours. In you I see the personification of all truth which was ever given to mankind." S.N. 8303

[1] In this Voysey wrote of "a special aspect of human progress which engages my thoughts and which you may feel has some bearing on your work in India, though your work is truly a world work and for all humanity. Blessed and happy are you." S.N. 8329

promise. If you are writing after receipt of this, it will be better to send your letter to my permanent address, namely, Sabarmati, near Ahmedabad.

Thanking you for your kind thoughts,

Yours sincerely,

A. A. VOYSEY, ESQ.
ST. ISIDORE
PRES NICE (FRANCE)

From a photostat: S.N. 8494

149. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

POST ANDHERI,
March 15, 1924

MY DEAR HENRY,

I have your letter[1] enclosing your Note on Kenya and a newspaper cutting[2]. I shall read the Note as soon as I have energy enough for taking up my normal activities. For the time being what I have of it I devote to only those matters on which I must express an opinion without delay. I hope you have received my letter[3] posted at Poona. At present I am in Mr. Narottam's[4] bungalow near Andheri. It is delightfully situated, faces the sea, and the waves wash its boundary.

Mr. Andrews is staying with me. He has been sent by the Poet specially to keep me company and to look after me. I am permitted to walk about 30 minutes which I do in the evening.

My love to you all.

Yours sincerely,

HY. S. L. POLAK, ESQ.
47-48, DANES INN HOUSE
205, STRAND
LONDON, W.C. 2

From a photostat: S.N. 8495

[1],[2] & [3] Not available
[4] Narottam Morarji, Agent of Scindia Steam Navigation Company

150. LETTER TO ALFRED C. MEYER

POST ANDHERI,
March 15, 1924

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of 2-2-1924.

There is at present a firm of booksellers in Madras known as S. Ganesan who sell a collection[1] of most of my articles in a weekly called *Young India* and edited by me. It will give you all the information that you are likely to desire.

Yours sincerely,

ALFRED C. MEYER, ESQ.
181, VINE AVENUE
HIGHLAND PARK
ILLINOIS, U.S.A.

From a photostat: S.N. 8496

151. LETTER TO V. K. SALVEKAR

POST ANDHERI,
March 15, 1924

DEAR MR. SALVEKAR[2],

I thank you for your letter offering me the use of your bungalow in Nasik. I know that the climate of Nasik is very salubrious, but at the present moment I am having my convalescence at a pleasant seaside retreat near Andheri. If this place does not suit me and I am advised to go to a dry place, I shall bear in mind your kind offer.

Yours sincerely,

V. K. SALVEKAR, ESQ.
HATTIKHANA ROAD
NASIK CITY

From a photostat: S.N. 8501

[1] This refers to the two volumes for 1919-22 and 1922-24.

[2] Vishwanath Keshav Salvekar, proprietor of Sardar Griha, a hotel in Bombay, had been introduced to Gandhiji by Tilak, who used to stay there occasionally.

152. LETTER TO S. E. STOKES

POST ANDHERI,
March 15, 1924

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of the 7th instant.[1]

As you must have seen from the papers, I have now removed to a seaside place. It is a beautiful retreat where we are accommodated. It faces the sea and we constantly hear the music of the waves. Somehow or other I feel that I must express as early as possible my opinion about the Council-entry, etc. I think, I have sufficient energy to do the mental work required for the purpose. I have already undertaken to see Hakimji and other friends. I am avoiding as much physical exertion as possible, and I do not think that the amount of mental work I am doing just now will do me harm.

An unknown friend wrote to me that you had asked him to send me some hill honey, and he kindly sent me 5 lbs. It was very good indeed. I understood subsequently that Mohanlal Pandya[2] had written to you for hill honey for me. I know that you have been exceedingly kind to me. He ought not to have troubled you. I was then getting good honey from Mahabaleshwar. During my illness I have been so overwhelmed with kindness from those whom I knew and those whom I had never the pleasure of knowing that I feel it was almost worth having that illness.

With love from both of us to both of you,

Yours ever,

[PS.] The memoranda have not yet reached me.

S. E. STOKES, ESQ.
HARMONY HALL
KOTGARH
SIMLA HILLS

From a photostat: S.N. 8497

[1] Stokes had urged upon Gandhiji that it was in the interests of the country that he should relax. Gandhiji appears to have written earlier to him: "It is my duty before coming to a final decision to understand thoroughly the viewpoint of those who advocated Council-entry." This letter is not available.

[2] A worker of Kheda district

153. LETTER TO FRASER ULSINS

POST ANDHERI,
March 15, 1924

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of the 10th February.[1]

I send my autograph on a separate piece of paper. I am sorry I cannot send you one in ink as my hand is yet too shaky for me to write a firm hand with an ink-pen.

Yours sincerely,

FRASER ULSINS, ESQ.
THE HILL SCHOOL
POTTSTOWN
PENNSYLVANIA, U.S.A.

From a photostat: S.N. 8498

154. LETTER TO S. A. BRELVI

POST ANDHERI,
March 15, 1924

DEAR MR. BRELVI,

I have your letter enclosing a synopsis of a novel written by Professor K. T. Shah[2]. I shall go through it as soon as I get the time for it and let you know whether I shall want the whole manuscript.

Yours sincerely,

S. A. BRELVI, ESQ.
"BOMBAY CHRONICLE" OFFICE
FORT
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 8504

[1] Ulsins had written that he was collecting autographs of famous men and would consider it a great honour to add Gandhiji's signature to his collection.

[2] Economist and author; secretary, National Planning Committee, set up by the Indian National Congress. He had written a historical novel in English dealing with the Non-co-operation movement with Gandhiji as the central figure.

155. LETTER TO M. PRATAP

POST ANDHERI,
March 15, 1924

DEAR FRIEND,

I was glad to receive your letter. When I went to Prem Vidyalaya, I believe Bhai Kotwal talked to me about you. Whilst it is true that we seem to see in Nature both the benignant and the malignant forces in full activity, I am convinced that it is the prerogative of man to rise superior to the eternal duel and to attain equanimity, and the only way we can do so is by practising to the fullest extent the truth-force, otherwise described as love-force or soul-force. You will not expect me to argue out the point. I can only place before you my conviction based upon prolonged experience during which I cannot recall a single occasion when this force has not completely answered. No doubt it requires the cultivation of patience, humility and the like.

Yours sincerely,

M. PRATAP, ESQ.
BAGH BABER
KABUL

From a photostat: S.N. 8499

156. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI[1]

POST ANDHERI,
March 15, 1924

MY DEAR FRIEND,

"Cheer, boys, cheer, no more of idle sorrow." Why worry about anything? There is an under-note[2] of sorrowful despair about your letter[3]. Better that, however, than nothing. You want me to whip you into cheerfulness and for my encouragement you cite the noble example of your cousin in Zanzibar. Only, he had

[1] Abbas Tyabji (1853-1936); former judge of Baroda High Court; nationalist Muslim leader of Gujarat.' He was one of the Commissioners appointed by the Punjab sub-committee of the Congress to report on the Punjab disorders.

[2] Perhaps a slip for "undertone"

[3] This was dated March 13.

a black boy who was really a boy to deal with, whereas I have the very difficult task of correcting a grown-up old boy with a hoary beard and a fair face. It was a comparatively easy task to brave the operation for appendicitis. But how shall I, a mere youngster compared to you, perform the task you expect me to handle? However, when we meet, I shall endeavour to prepare myself for it. You[1] do not know that at the present moment I am sporting a proper Afghan stick. Therefore better beware. Permission to lodge with me is only granted to fellow-patients. You are suffering from melancholia and are hereby permitted to come whenever you choose and can. Only the upper floor rooms are all practically taken up. If, therefore, you want privacy, I shall have to condemn you to a first-floor room, but I have just received a letter from Devchand Parekh of Kathiawar that that tyrant-king of Gujarat, Vallabhbhai, is packing you off to Kathiawar.

I am making steady progress. I am putting through a fair amount of work every day. I am not yet capable of much physical exertion.

How is Mrs. Abbas? Where are the girls? What are they doing? Devdas told me that Fatima had at last been married. To whom was she married? Are the couple happy? Where are they staying? What is the husband doing? You see I am interested in all the members of the family because for so many years now it has made me one of the members! You must excuse a dictated domestic letter. My hand is too shaky to write as much as I should like to, and as I wanted to give you a fairly long letter, I had to choose between not writing such a letter or[2] dictating. I have chosen the latter course.

With love to you all and *bhurr*[3] to you in addition,

Yours,
M. K. G.

ABBAS TYABJI, ESQ.
BARODA CAMP

From a photostat: S.N. 9595

[1] The source has "we", which is a slip.
[2] Perhaps a slip for "and"
[3] This was a form of greeting used by Gandhiji and the addressee for each other.

157. *LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU*

POST ANDHERI,
March 15, 1924

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I have your letter, and I had your and Mahomed Ali's telegrams regarding Panikkar.[1] Your letter embarrasses me a little. I have not intended, nor do I intend now to form any decided opinion about making appointments, fixing salaries, etc. As I shared Joseph's opinion that he should be by his wife's side when she was so much troubled, and as the Sikh friends who came to see me seemed to be very anxious to have a substitute for Gidwani, a substitute who could also edit their paper *Onward*, I was on the look-out for one. They wanted Sundaram who used to be on the *Independent* and suggested that he could do both the things—publicity and editing. On my arrival at the retreat near Andheri, I saw Panikkar who had come to see Mr. Andrews in order to discuss the advisability of an offer that was made to him by the *Indian Daily Mail*. He had hesitation in accepting the offer because the *Mail* politics were not his. I then thought of the publicity work and asked Panikkar whether he would shoulder the burden, and as I did not know him well, I consulted Mr. Andrews too, and when Panikkar was prepared to go to Amritsar if you wanted him and as Mr. Andrews thought that he would make a very good

[1] Gandhiji appears to have wired Jawaharlal Nehru on March 12. The telegram is not available. Nehru replied to it on March 13. He had written: "I have known Panikkar by repute for several years and met him for a short time in Cocanada. I am sure his presence will be very useful in Amritsar. His ignorance of Hindustani will be a drawback, but this will be more than compensated by his other attainments. He will be an excellent man for publicity work. Perhaps, owing to his language difficulty, he might not be very helpful in bringing the Sikhs and Hindus nearer to each other. But on the whole Panikkar will be an acquisition in Amritsar. As regards terms, anythirg that you consider reasonable will surely be agreed to by all others. Technically, the Working Committee will not meet till the 21st April. The terms suggested in your telegram are rather complicated, but that is for you to decide. I am glad that Panikkar contemplates a lengthy stay at Amritsar. Personally, I doubt if it will be necessary for him to stay for many months. There is just a possibility of Gidwani coming out sooner and an equal possibility of Gidwani's successor going in. Of course, Panikkar will not unnecessarily invite jail, but neither did Gidwani."

substitute for Gidwani, I wired. But I had no desire that you should be influenced in any way by the wire because it was from me. If I was well and could acquaint myself with all the details, I should certainly have given my advice and opinion as to the selection, but for the present beyond interesting myself in the few things in which I must, I really do not want to tax my energy.

With reference to the salary the position was this. Panikkar was in the *Swarajya* office at Rs. 700/- per month, but as the paper is not self-supporting, it has not been able to pay him a few months' salary. He left it because he could not hit it off with Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar. He has to discharge a debt of Rs. 900 in Madras. He needs Rs. 300 per month. I therefore thought that if he was paid Rs. 900 in advance, he could discharge the debt and proceed to Amritsar. He would still want his expenses [to be met] at Amritsar. For this Rs. 100 monthly should be paid to him by way of loan. At the end of 3 months' service, therefore, he will be owing to the Congress Rs. 300. This may again be deducted from his salary at the rate of Rs. 100 per month. That means that he has to serve for 6 months in order to discharge the loan he would be receiving. I am now perturbed because I gather from your letter that he may not be wanted for that length of time. I would not like to be the instrument of useless expense to the Congress. I propose, therefore, to place the whole situation before Panikkar, and he will probably agree that if his services are dispensed with before 6 months, he should be liable for the unpaid balance of the loan. He is not here at the present moment, or I should have sent you a more decisive letter.

I do not feel that you would want me, if it was possible, to cancel the engagement with Panikkar and am therefore letting it stand and sending him to Amritsar tomorrow. In accordance with your latest telegram, he will be going direct to Amritsar. Please authorize the Treasurer to reimburse to me the amount that I shall be paying Panikkar.

Indeed, if I was minded to influence you, I should ask you to reconsider the question of each appointment for two reasons: (1) Should the Congress spend money on non-Congress work? (2) What should be the maximum the Congress should pay its servants?

So much for business. My wound is completely healed, but the affected part is yet tender and requires care and attention. The seaside convalescence is likely to suit me. I propose, if all goes well, to stop here for 3 months. During the time I shall be doing as much writing work as I can and conferring with the

leaders upon the Council-entry, etc. Father, Hakimji and others are expected here by the end of the month. You need not hesitate to come down for consultation whenever you wish. I expect in any event to see you on the 20th prox. as I understand the Working Committee meets on that date. I do hope you are keeping well and taking care of yourself.

Panikkar has seen this letter and he will hold himself ready to be relieved whenever you think it necessary and would be liable for repayment of the loan.

Yours sincerely,

PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

From a photostat: S.N. 8503

158. LETTER TO A. A. PAUL

POST ANDHERI,
March 15, 1924

DEAR MR. PAUL,

I have your letter of the 8th inst. enclosing a copy of Mr. Aitken's letter. I believe he and I know each other. If he is the Mr. Aitken I know, he knows my views very well. However, I shall jot them down here for what they are worth.

The Indian community of South Africa includes people from all provinces and represents Hinduism, Islam, Christianity and Zoroastrianism. There are many South Africa-born Indians who are Christians and are highly educated and therefore naturally very sensitive about self-respect. The restrictive legislation of South Africa applies to them although South Africa is their home and although the majority of them never expect to see India at all. It is not known here that rightly or wrongly these young men and women have adopted European customs, manners, dress, etc., but neither their Christianity nor their education nor their Europeanization has saved them from the bar sinister. I mention this fact not to show that they should have a special or separate treatment (they would themselves object to any such distinction), but to emphasize the fact that the restrictive legislation in South Africa is predominantly racial in character. The economic aspect occupies a subordinate position. The Indian claim is exceedingly simple and reasonable. They have voluntarily accepted administrative restriction of Indian immigration and, as a matter of fact, hardly any Indian who has not previously resided in South Africa

and practically made it his home is admitted. In exchange for this voluntary self-denial, the domiciled community claims equality of treatment. This position has been always regarded by the thoughtful Europeans of South Africa as eminently reasonable, and in 1914, an agreement was arrived at between the South African Government and the Indian community to which both the Imperial and the Indian Governments were party, whereby it was understood that no further restrictive legislation should be passed and that the position of the domiciled Indians would be steadily and progressively ameliorated.[1] The local Indian community, therefore, has a double grievance in respect of the present anti-Indian agitation in South Africa. The vast majority of Europeans in South Africa are nominally Christian. I have the privilege of claiming many of them, especially the missionaries, as my life-long friends. What is wanted is for the real Christians to dare to stand for truth and justice. There is unfortunately too much of expedience even amongst some of the best of them. They think that standing for truth in the face of prejudice will impair their usefulness for service. I have always dissented from this view, and my humble opinion based upon extensive experience is that such an attitude is a concession, although totally unconscious, to Satan.

I need hardly assure you that Mr. Aitken's letter will be regarded as strictly confidential and, on that account, I shall make no use of my letter to you either.

Yours truly,

A. A. PAUL, ESQ.
GENERAL SECRETARY
THE STUDENT CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION OF INDIA, BURMA & CEYLON
6, MILLER ROAD, KILPAUK
MADRAS

From photostats: S.N. 8500 and 9927

[1] *Vide* Vol. XII, pp. 330

159. *CABLE TO EAST AFRICAN INDIAN CONGRESS*[1]

[On or after *March 15, 1924*]

CONGRESS
MOMBASA

DELIGHTED COMMUNITY GOING FORWARD WITH PROGRAMME SUFFERING SUCCESS YOURS IF YOU CONTINUE. REGRET UNABLE SEND ANYONE. ANDREWS JOINS.[2]

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 9926

160. *CABLE TO SAROJINI NAIDU*[3]

[Before *March 16, 1924*][4]

PRAY TELL GENERAL SMUTS AND RESPONSIBLE EUROPEANS THAT THE CLASS AREAS BILL[5] IS A POOR RECOMPENSE FOR THE LOCAL INDIANS' EXEMPLARY SELF-RESTRAINT THROUGHOUT THE INTERESTED CAMPAIGN AGAINST THEM. EUROPEANS SHOULD REMEMBER THAT THE LOCAL INDIANS VOLUNTARILY SUBMITTED TO THE ADMINISTRATIVE RESTRICTION OF FURTHER INDIAN IMMIGRATION. REMIND THE UNION GOVERNMENT OF THE ASSURANCE GIVEN TO GOKHALE[6]

[1] This was in reply to a cable from the East African Indian Congress dated March 15, which read: "Non-payment going ahead. Government callous imprisoning attaching property. Request send four workers preferably Andrews, Vallabhbhai, Mahadevbhai, Devdas. You visit Kenya recovery health."

[2] At the end of the draft telegram Gandhiji wrote: "Let Mr. Andrews see this and forward tomorrow if he approves."

[3] Sarojini Naidu (1879-1949); poetess, social reformer; lectured widely in India and the U.S.A. in 1928-29; first woman President of the Congress, 1925. She was in South Africa at this time.

[4] *Gujarati*, 16-3-1924, carried a translation of this cable.

[5] "This, though not specifically directed against Indians, contained provisions which could be used in urban areas for the compulsory segregation of Asiatics", and "might well have led to the utter ruin of many Indian traders . . . ." The bill lapsed for the year 1924 as a consequence of the unexpected dissolution of the South African House of Assembly.

[6] On his visit to South Africa in 1912; *vide* Vol. XI.

THAT NO FURTHER DISABLING LEGISLATION WILL BE PASSED. ALSO THE COMPACT OF 1914[1] NOTHING SINCE DONE BY THE LOCAL INDIANS DESERVES THE PROPOSED TREATMENT. ACCEPTANCE OF THE CLASS AREAS BILL IS TANTAMOUNT TO POLITICAL AND CIVIL SUICIDE. I TRUST YOUR WINSOME ELOQUENCE WILL DISARM OPPOSITION AND MAKE THE LOT OF YOUR COUNTRYMEN EASIER FOR YOUR PRESENCE.

From a microfilm of a newspaper cutting: S.N. 8535

161. LETTER TO J. P. BHANSALI

POST ANDHERI,
March 16, 1924

MY DEAR BHANSALI,

How glad I was to receive your letter! I have gone through the greater part of it. I have not yet read the cuttings you have attached to it. I want to write out my jail experiences. Your notes[2] will be valuable. I propose to send them to Jairamdas for him to add, amend or merely corroborate. Having remained in perfect isolation from you all, my statement must in some respects be one-sided. Your notes will, therefore, as I have said, be of value.

I confess that I had not thought of referring to you or Jairamdas at the time of writing my experiences. Nothing had matured in my mind as I am just now occupied with the things on which I must give my opinion. Your letter, however, has come at a most opportune moment. You have said nothing about yourself. Do please let me have a line. Hardly a day has passed but I have thought of you. I had inquired of you of everyone who had come from the Ashram.

Yours,

SJT. J. P. BHANSALI
SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM
SABARMATI

From a photostat: S.N. 8506

[1] Made between Gandhiji and General Smuts, on January 22, 1914, it bound the Government to the principle of consultation with Indians before any legislation affecting them was passed. *Vide* Vol. XII, pp. 330-8.

[2] These are not available. It is however likely that these related to Bhansali's own experiences of jail life; *vide* also the following item.

162. LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

POST ANDHERI,
March 16, 1924

MY DEAR JAIRAMDAS,

Bhansali has sent me the accompanying notes. I would like you to go through them and add, amend or corroborate. It will help me to supplement my own jail experiences so that I may not give a mere rosy picture. Do also tell me when you write as to how you are getting on and tell me all about Dr. Choithram's health. He must get well very quickly.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM
HYDERABAD (SIND)

From a photostat: S.N. 8507

163. LETTER TO A. D. SKENE CATLING

POST ANDHERI,
March 16, 1924

DEAR MR. CATLING,

I thank you for your note sent through Mr. Panikkar.

I shall be delighted to see you and Mr. Iyer on Wednesday at the time stated by you.

Yours sincerely,

A. D. SKENE CATLING, ESQ.
MESSRS REUTERS LIMITED
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 8509

164. LETTER TO D. HANUMANTRAO

POST ANDHERI,
March 16, 1924

MY DEAR HANUMANTRAO,

I have your long but welcome letter. You need not apologize henceforth for the length of your letters because you never write idly. The only way for those of us who, living in isolated, unprotected places, rely for protection upon God's grace and not upon force of arms, is to have as few valuables as possible whether in the shape of money or otherwise, and to cultivate fellowship even with the roughest element surrounding us. That is what is being attempted at Sabarmati.

I appreciate your suggestion regarding the founding of an Ashram like the Sabarmati one in the different Provinces of India. I would like to do so, but they cannot be founded for the mere wish. We need the proper stamp of men and I have no knowledge of them. You have established one and you realize the difficulty of carrying it on. There is another at Wardha, as you know, conducted by Vinoba, whom you know. It came into being because a Vinoba was found. There is another near Andheri, because a Keshavrao Deshpande has been found. All the four are struggling. Such Ashrams are an organic growth and they will come into being in their own time, but I like the centre of your suggestion, namely, that I should remain at the Sabarmati Ashram and endeavour to make it perfect. I would love to do it. The external political activity is not of my seeking. I therefore cannot give it up of my will. If God desires that I should develop the Ashram by being in it, He will make my way clear. If it is a real organic growth, I know that it will continue to make progress whether I am in it or outside. After all, if any such institution has to depend merely upon one man's existence on earth, it has to perish with him, but if it is to be of a permanent character, it must depend for its existence upon its own independence and internal vitality. Nor need we be impatient about their progress or success. It is sufficient if we do the best according to our lights and leave the rest to Him who disposes of everything. I think you have done well in not taking upon your shoulders the grave responsibility of taking young women in the Ashram so long as you have no woman worker who can stand on her own and who can be-

come a wall of protection to such girls. I shall hope that your own wife will be such in time.

Now about the Nature-cure. Every change at Sabarmati, so far as diet and medicinal aid are concerned, is, I know, a fall. It commenced with my first serious illness. It shook me and I lost confidence in myself, whereas at Kochrab I handled fearlessly and with confidence in Nature's healing power two cases of confluent small-pox in the face of medical opposition and serious enteric fever at the same time. At Sabarmati, after my illness, I have not been able to handle even trivial cases. My theory is that a man who himself becomes a prey to illness is unfit to guide others. I tried almost to the point of obstinacy to do without milk and ghee, but I failed. Had the illness not overcome me, I would have continued my experiments, but I was nonplussed, and I must make the same sad confession about medicine. A man who advises abstention from such things must be prepared with an effective substitute. Having myself become a broken reed, I have allowed things to take their own course. This breakdown in the application of Nature-cure is a tragedy of my life. Not that I have lost faith in it, but I have lost confidence in myself. Help me to recover it. You can see how Maganlal understands me through and through. He has sent Shivabhai to you without any reference to me, because he realizes our tragic fate just as much as I do. We shall all, therefore, be watching your progress with greatest sympathy and attention. You will therefore not hesitate to write to me about this whenever you have anything new to tell me.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. D. HANUMANTRAO
SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM
PALLEPADU (NELLORE DIST.)

From a microfilm: S.N. 8508; also C.W. 5113

165. LETTER TO MANGAL SINGH

POST ANDHERI,
March 16, 1924

DEAR SARDAR MANGAL SINGH,

This will introduce to you Mr. Panikkar who is coming there to replace Professor Gidwani. You may know that Mr. Panikkar is an M.A. of Oxford with First Class Honours. He was a Professor in the Aligarh Muslim University and non-co-operated on my imprisonment. He was in the *Swarajya* office with Mr. Prakasam for some time. If you want him, he will edit the *Onward* also. I have given him the purport of our conversations. I believe that Mr. Panikkar has assimilated the essentials of the doctrine of non-violence. I have told him that he is to give the public an unvarnished and impartial statement about all the happenings in connection with the movement of the S.G.P.C. Whilst he must necessarily be sympathetic in his consideration of the situation as it presents itself to him from time to time, he must not hide shortcomings if he notices any, and I have told him too that not to hide them would be the best service he can render to the cause. He will, of course, show the head of the S.G.P.C. all the reports that he makes to the Congress Committee from time to time previous to their despatch to the Secretary.

Will you kindly make arrangements for Mr. Panikkar's lodgings and ordinary comforts and also take him to Mrs. Gidwani and Mrs. Kitchlew.

I hope the work is going on smoothly. Please remember me to the friends who accompanied you. I hope to hear from you in due course. I need hardly say how glad I was to find that the Jatha allowed itself to be arrested without a murmur and in a dignified manner.[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SARDAR MANGAL SINGH
AMRITSAR

From a photostat: S.N. 9929

[1] On March 17, Mangal Singh replied, saying that the earlier instructions to the Jatha to "sit tight" and "not willingly give themselves up for arrest" were later revised and they were asked to "gladly surrender". 500 of the

166. TELGERAM TO SHUKLA[1]

[On or after *March 16, 1924*]

CONGRATULATIONS COMMUNITY FOR JATHA'S DIGNIFIED PEACEFUL SURRENDER. ANDREWS JOINS. PANIKKAR REACHING THERE TUESDAY. PLEASE MEET.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 9928

167. THE ROOT OBJECTION

ANDHERI,
March 17, 1924

A document dated the 1st of February 1920 and signed by me at Lahore and handed to Dr. (now Sir) Joseph Nunan[2] has been reproduced in an elaborate paper (dated 22nd November 1923) on the status of Indians abroad. As it has been used in support of a scheme of Indian colonization in British Guiana and as it is stated in that paper—"so far as is known, it still expresses Mahatma Gandhi's attitude towards British Guiana," it is necessary to make my position clear. The statement made by me in the February of 1920 is as follows:

Lahore, 1st February, 1920

> From the outset Mr. Gandhi made it perfectly clear that he was not prepared to take any step that could be construed as a personal encouragement by him to Indians to leave India. He was not in favour of the emigration of Indians. At the same time he realized that many held different views on this point and he was equally not in favour of using compulsion

Jatha accordingly surrendered. He spoke of the "splendid behaviour, cool courage and remarkable restraint displayed by the Jatha" and requested Gandhiji to address them a few lines on this point.

[1] This was in reply to a telegram from Shukla of Akali Sahayak Bureau dated March 15 received on March 16, 1924, which read: "Second Shahidi Jatha on receiving order of arrest surrendered itself in exemplary manner. Official poster at Amritsar admits their peaceful behaviour."

[2] Attorney-General of British Guiana. In 1920 he led a deputation to India to recruit emigrants for colonization in British Guiana.

by legislative or executive action to compel Indians to stay at home. They should be treated as free citizens at home and abroad. They should certainly, however, be protected from misrepresentation. He knew nothing to prevent people emigrating now except a Defence of the Realm Regulation which would expire six months after the War. (This is the regulation preventing the emigration of unskilled labourers for work abroad, until six months after the War, unless under special or general licence.)

Once assured that equal rights for Indians existed in regard to political, municipal, legal, commercial and industrial matters in British Guiana, and that they were not alone receiving fair treatment from the administration and the general community, but would be guaranteed the continuance of such fair treatment, he would not oppose any scheme of free colonization by Indian agricultural families.

He was satisfied that the Colony had a liberal constitution, and that Indians could be and were elected to membership of the Legislature and to municipal office. He was satisfied that they had equality of rights with other races, and that there were opportunities of acquiring land for settlement. He was in favour of allowing a test of the scheme subject to a report at the end of six months on its working by Mr. C. F. Andrews or some other representative of the Indian popular leaders. The deputation accepted this proposal of a report by a popular representative independently of any supervising officer nominated by the Indian Government, and offered to pay all expenses.

Mr. Gandhi agreed that all necessary guarantees for the continuance of equal treatment could be furnished by the Colonial Office and British Guiana Government through the Government of India to the Indian people and its popular leaders.[1]

It was hardly fair to use this statement in support of any scheme. It could only be used for supporting a trial shipment under the supervision of Mr. C. F. Andrews or someone having the same status and having the same intimate knowledge of the position of British Indians abroad. But I admit that if such a trial proved successful from the Indian standpoint, I should be bound, under the foregoing statement, not to oppose a scheme of colonization under proper safeguards. My views, however, since the February of 1920, about the British system of Government have, as is well known, undergone a revolutionary change. At the time I gave the statement, my faith in that system, in spite of bitter, hostile experiences, had not altogether disappeared. But now I am able no longer to rely upon verbal or written promises made by

[1] For Gandhiji's views on the question expressed in 1920, *vide* Vol. XVII, pp. 5-7 & 8-11.

persons working under that system and in their capacity as officials or supporters. The history of Indian emigrants to South Africa, East Africa and Fiji is a history of broken promises and of ignominious surrender of their trust by the Imperial Government and the Indian Government, whenever it has been a question of conflicting interests of Europeans against Indians. The handful of Europeans have almost succeeded in East Africa in bullying the Imperial Government into sacrificing the prior rights of Indian settlers there. In South Africa, the Indian settlers' fate is trembling in the balance. In Fiji, the Indian is still the underdog. There is no reason to suppose that British Guiana, if the test came, will be an exception. The moment Indians become successful rivals of Europeans in that colony, that very moment all guarantees, written or verbal, will disappear. Filled as I am with utter distrust of the British Imperial system, I am unable to countenance any scheme of emigration to British Guiana, no matter how promising it may appear on paper and no matter what guarantees may be given for due fulfilment of the pledges given. The benefit that must accrue to the Indian emigrants under any such scheme will be illusory. I am, therefore, unable to countenance the proposed scheme of Indian colonization in British Guiana. I do not hesitate to give my opinion without consultation with the British Guiana deputations because of the root objection stated above. If I had to express an opinion upon the merits of the scheme, the ordinary rule of courtesy would have bound me, before saying anything hostile to it, to meet the British Guiana deputations and understand their view-points. Not till India has come to her own and has a government fully responsible to her people and able effectively to protect Indian settlers abroad from injustice can any advantage accrue to Indian emigrants even under an ideal scheme.

M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 20-3-1924

168. LETTER TO A. W. BAKER[1]

POST ANDHERI,
March 18, 1924

DEAR MR. BAKER,

I was delighted to receive your letter with *The Key to Happiness. Be Careful for Nothing* has ever been with me, and did I not place all my worries at the feet of God, I should have gone mad by this time. All I can say at present about the other part of your letter is that I am endeavouring to follow where God leads me. Nothing can possibly keep me away from that light except my ignorance. I have no axes to grind, no worldly ambition to serve. The only purpose of life is to see God face to face, and the more I see of life and its experiences, the more I feel that everyone does not receive the light in the same way even as, though the sun is the same, we see it differently from the equatorial regions, from the temperate zone and from the frigid zone. But I do not wish to argue with you. I have simply stated what has become a deep conviction with me.

Do please remember me to the friends I had the privilege of knowing there.

Yours sincerely,

A. W. Baker, Esq.
HILLCREST
P.O. NORTH RAND
TRANSVAAL

From a copy: S.N. 8528; also C.W. 5128

[1] Attorney for Dada Abdulla Sheth, whom Gandhiji met in Pretoria in 1893; introduced the latter to Christian friends; *vide* Vol. I, p. 82. Gandhiji wrote of him: "He still corresponds with me. In his letters he always dwells on the same theme. He upholds the excellence of Christianity. . . ." *Vide An Autobiography*, Pt. II, Ch. X.

169. LETTER TO HARDAYAL NAG

POST ANDHERI,
March 18, 1924

DEAR MR. NAG[1],

I have your letter of the 9th instant.

Thanks for your inquiry about my health. I am making steady progress and am able to attend to my correspondence. Do please therefore write whatever you wish to.

Yours sincerely,

BABU HARDAYAL NAG
CHANDPUR
DIST. TIPPERAH (BENGAL)

From a photostat: S.N. 8519; also C.W. 5122

170. LETTER TO DR. M. A. ANSARI[2]

POST ANDHERI,
March 18, 1924

DEAR DR. ANSARI[3],

How relieved I was to receive your comforting wire. Many thanks for it. The Big Brother cannot afford to be laid up in bed. The work before [us] is appalling and we are so few to do it. Please keep me informed of the patient's progress from day to day.

Pray remember me to Begum Ansari, Dr. Abdur Rahman and other friends.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 8521

1 President, Bengal Provincial Congress Committee

2 This was in reply to Dr. Ansari's telegram of March 18, concerning Shaukat Ali's illness, which read: "Blood examination proved mild typhoid infection. Temperature varies 101 to 104. No complications, no anxiety." S.N. 8517. Gandhiji also wrote to Shaukat Ali; *vide* the following item.

3 Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed Ansari (1880-1936); nationalist Muslim leader; President, Muslim League, 1920; President, Indian National Congress, 1927

171. LETTER TO SHAUKAT ALI

March 18, 1924

DEAR FRIEND AND BIG BROTHER,

It ill becomes you to have typhoid fever or any fever. Let illness be only my lot in our circle. But I do not want to inflict a long letter on you. May God soon restore you.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 8520

172. LETTER TO N. K. BEHARE

POST ANDHERI,
March 18, 1924

DEAR MR. BEHARE,

I have the text of the resolutions passed by the Depressed Classes Conference held at Koteshwar. You may depend upon my doing all that is possible for me to do in the common cause.

Yours sincerely,

N. K. BEHARE, ESQ.
NORMAL SCHOOL
WARDHA

From a photostat: S.N. 8522; also C.W. 5121

173. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

ANDHERI,
March 18, 1924

DEAR MOTILALJI[1],

I have your telegram about rejection of the Finance Bill.[2] I rejoice because the victory gives you joy, but I cannot enthuse over it, nor am I amazed at the victory. With proper discipline and tact it was not an impossible feat, and I never doubted your very great tactfulness and persuasive eloquence and your patience with threats, and I entirely agree with you that, if you had more time for organization and a larger backing from the country, you would have carried everything before you in the Provincial as well as the Central Legislature. What, however, I cannot get over I explained somewhat to Lalaji[3]. Since then my views have developed further along the same line, and at one time I thought of dictating a fairly long letter setting forth my views, but I held back for three reasons. I doubted the wisdom of the course. Knowing how busy you are, I felt I ought not to inflict a long letter on you, and thirdly, I wanted to conserve my energy for the things I must do from day to day. If you are able to carry out the original programme, we shall meet before long.

I hope in the midst of your very wonderful activities you are keeping good health.

Yours sincerely,

[PS.] I have just received your second wire. How I wish I could see eye to eye with you and thus share your joy to the full.

PANDIT MOTILAL NEHRU
25, WESTERN HOSTEL
DELHI

From a photostat of the typewritten office copy: S.N. 8525; also C.W. 5118

[1] Motilal Nehru (1861-1931); lawyer and politician; co-founder of Swaraj Party; elected to Central Legislative Assembly in 1923 and 1926; presided over Committee which drafted Nehru Report, 1928; President of the Indian National Congress, 1919 and 1928

[2] On March 17, on a motion by Madan Mohan Malaviya, the Central Legislative Assembly had withheld leave to introduce the Finance Bill by 60 votes against 57. Motilal Nehru's telegram, dated March 18, said: "Finance Bill again introduced today with Viceroy's recommendation. Assembly refused leave without division."

[3] Lala Lajpat Rai

174. LETTER TO FRANCIS LOW

POST ANDHERI,
March 18, 1924

DEAR MR. LOW,

I have your note of the 17th instant.[1]

I shall be glad to see your representative on Thursday next at 9 a.m.

Yours sincerely,

FRANCIS LOW, ESQ.
"EVENING NEWS OF INDIA"
TIMES BUILDING
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 8524; also C.W. 5123

175. LETTER TO FRANK P. SMITH

POST ANDHERI,
March 18, 1924

DEAR FRIEND,

I must thank you for your letter of 5th February and for [your] appreciation.[2]

Yours sincerely,

FRANK P. SMITH, ESQ.
MESSRS THOMPSON & SMITH
LAWYERS
SAPULPA, OKLA.
U.S.A.

From a copy: C.W. 5119

[1] Francis Low, then Assistant Editor, had proposed that, in view of Gandhiji's health, the interview should not be long or of an exhaustive character, but should deal with the representative's impressions of his visit. For the report, *vide* "Interview to *Evening News of India*", 20-3-1924.

[2] Frank P. Smith, of a firm of lawyers, Oklahoma, U.S.A., had written: "With all of the world figures of statesmanship in mind, I greet you as the foremost one from a real Christian standpoint. The great principle of all wisdom, progressing materially with all power that works anywhere to its infinite

176. LETTER TO HOWARD S. ROSS

POST ANDHERI,
March 18, 1924

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter[1] of the 15th February.

In the present state of my health, I am able only to give my attention to things I know and which I dare not avoid.

Yours sincerely,

HOWARD S. ROSS, ESQ.
MESSRS. MONTY, DURANLEAU, ROSS AND ANGERS
BARRISTERS AND SOLICITORS
VERSAILLES BUILDING
90, ST. JAMES STREET
MONTREAL (CANADA)

From a photostat: S.N. 8523; also C.W. 5120

177. LETTER TO K. P. KESAVA MENON

POST ANDHERI,
March 19, 1924

MY DEAR KESAVA MENON,

I have your letter.[2]

I know that the condition of the suppressed classes is the worst in your part of India. As you say, they are not merely untouchable, but they may not walk through certain streets. Their

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ends, will vindicate my esteem of you. Your policy is the first one which practically concedes the supremacy of the spiritual over the material, the superiority of the power of love over that of physical force. We could well follow . . . your example to a peace that will be universal and lasting. . . . " S.N. 8234

[1] This referred to a scheme for the substitution of a 'work-unit' for a 'result-unit' which, it claimed, was the 'cause of all trouble' in labour relations. Ross also sent Gandhiji a copy of *Equitist*, organ of the 'Equitist' movement. S.N. 8336

[2] Kesava Menon, Secretary, District Congress Committee, had informed Gandhiji in his letter of March 12 that a procession of the *Ezhavas*, the *Tiyyas* and the *Pulayas*—the 'unapproachables'—would be taken on a 'prohibited' public road round the temple, "to be conducted in the most orderly way possible". *Vide* Appendix IX.

condition is truly deplorable. I do not wonder that we have not yet attained swaraj. To vindicate the right of these countrymen of ours to the use of public streets, the Provincial Committee is organizing a procession containing them that shall pass through the forbidden streets.[1] This is a species of satyagraha. At this stage I do not need to draw attention to its conditions. There should be no show of force if any of our people oppose their progress. You should meekly submit and take all the beating, if any. Everyone taking part in the procession should be acquainted with the conditions and be prepared to fulfil them. There should be only a limited number. There should be no defiance, and if you find that the processionists are not likely to comply with the conditions, there should be no hesitation in postponing the procession. I fear that we have not canvassed enough the opponents of the reform. Caution, therefore, is all the more necessary. The problem, I know, is very difficult. To advise from my sick-bed is easy enough. The best thing, therefore, that I can do is, after uttering the caution, to wish you every success in the proposed enterprise.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. P. KESAVA MENON
CALICUT

From a photostat: S.N. 10262; also C.W. 5124

178. LETTER TO D. R. MAJLI

March 19, 1924

MY DEAR MAJLI,

My hand is a little steady now. How delightful to have your postcard! Do write whenever you can. You will soon be calm, I have no doubt. Do not fail to come here whenever you are permitted and able.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

D. R. MAJLI
BELGAUM

From a copy : S.N. 8530

[1] A newspaper report said : "Arrangements are briskly going on in Vykom to start satyagraha in case the authorities prohibit the unapproachables from passing along the Temple Road." The Untouchability Committee was to meet at Vykom on March 28 to decide the line of action.

179. LETTER TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR[1]

POST ANDHERI,
March 19, 1924

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I was able today to read your interview[2] from first to last.

You have touched upon topics on some of which I am pledged to silence till I have met the leaders who have warmly advocated Council-entry.

Whether the last Congress[3] was a success or not is a question upon which I can say nothing because I was not an eye-witness. Your remarks on the question are most interesting.

You seem to think that the Congress has done very little in the matter of untouchability and general national education. I venture to dissent from the view. The removal of untouchability has been brought within the range of possibility in the near future because of the incessant propaganda by Congress Hindus. No doubt a great deal still remains to be done. It is not an easy feat to root out prejudices which have acquired an undeserved sanctity because of their age. But the barrier is breaking down.

I heartily endorse your remark that it is the duty of the Hindus to move and win over all the minorities to the service of the country.

I wish that your pronouncement against untouchability was more precise and uncompromising. I am not concerned with its origin. I have no manner of doubt that the higher orders are entirely responsible for perpetuating the sin. It is unfortunate, too, that you have likened the untouchability of women and others on certain occasions with the permanent untouchability under every circumstance of the suppressed classes and their descendants. Nor am I enamoured of the method you have suggested for the amelioration of the condition of these classes.

You say that the boycott of law-courts and Government schools should be removed. I venture to doubt the soundness of the proposition. Its value is at the present moment negative, but none

[1] C. Vijayaraghavachariar (1852-1943); lawyer and Congressman; presided over the Nagpur session of the Indian National Congress, 1920

[2] This had appeared in *The Hindu* and *Voice of India*. Vijayaraghavachariar had sent a copy to Gandhiji which, however, is not available.

[3] The Cocanada session of 1923 over which Mahomed Ali presided

the less great on that account. Both these institutions have lost prestige. What is wanted is removal of the slightest trace of bitterness against those who do not comply with the boycott, that is, lawyers who still practise law and boys who still make use of Government schools. We shall win both over if we are not bitterly hostile, but concede to them the right of free judgment or sympathize with them for their weakness. I am convinced that, whenever we have not succeeded well or at all, the primary reason has been our inability or unwillingness to enforce non-violence with all its implications in our personal conduct.

I do not wish to say anything about your suggestions as to the position after swaraj, if only because methods that ultimately bring about swaraj will largely decide our programme after swaraj.

You seem to think that "for years to come, perhaps for a century or for ever" we are bound to be partners with England not from choice, but because we must. Therefore, for you evidently swaraj without the British connection is unthinkable. In my opinion, if British connection is a necessity of our existence, whatever the measure of freedom we may enjoy under that connection, it cannot be described as full swaraj, for full swaraj means, in my humble opinion, our ability at any moment to sever the connection. Partnership for me has no meaning if one party is too weak to dissolve it. It will also follow from your reasoning that swaraj will only have to be a grant from the British Parliament. You know my view. The very definition that I give to swaraj is that we have to take it and, therefore, we have to grow to it. It is an eternal condition, whether with an individual or with a nation. Moreover, if swaraj has only to be received as a grant from the British Parliament, the whole of the argument against Council-entry, in my humble opinion, falls to pieces.

I hope you are keeping well. I am making slow but steady progress.[1]

Yours sincerely,

SJT. C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR
THE ARAMA
SALEM

From a photostat : S.N. 8526; also C.W. 5125

[1] Vijayaraghavachariar replied to this letter on March 23; *vide* "Letter to C. Vijayaraghavachariar", 28-3-1924; also *vide* Appendix X.

180. *LETTER TO S. E. STOKES*

POST ANDHERI,
March 19, 1924

DEAR FRIEND,

I got the registered packet[1] on Sunday, and yesterday being my first Monday of silence after admission to the Sassoon Hospital, I was able to read both the papers. The written memorandum I am sending up as desired by you. I found both to be useful and instructive as giving me the mentality of one of whose impartiality I am certain and whose opinions I value. If I could but accept your premises and your view of non-co-operation, there is not much with which I should disagree. I entirely endorse your opinion that, if there is any Council-entry at all, it should not be for mere obstruction. On the contrary, we should take advantage of everything good that may be offered by the Government measures and endeavour to do our best to correct the evil in them. Accepting your reasoning, I would also endorse your view that the embargo upon lawyers and law-courts should also be lifted. But I think that, perhaps, there is a fundamental difference between us as to the interpretation and implications of non-violent non-co-operation and, therefore, what appeared to you to be a dismal outlook on your coming out of prison would not have set me thinking of other means of getting rid of the paralysis which you felt and saw had overcome all Congress activities. I would have regarded it as a necessary stage in the evolution of the public life of the country. It would have been for me a rare opportunity and still rarer privilege for redoubling my efforts and testing my faith in the programme. You have cited your own personal experiences and naturally concluded that there was something wrong about the programme in that the work that was patiently built by you and your co-workers had been almost undone in a moment. But there is a saying among lawyers that hard cases make bad law. Properly applied, it is a sound truth. Paraphrased in religious terms, it means that because, under some exceptional circumstances, departure from religious truth may appear to be advantageous, it furnishes no ground for losing faith in the truth. In your own case I would

[1] This contained "memorandums which put the case for Council-entry more completely".

have reasoned to myself: This undoing of the work must be regarded as the people's sacrifice in order to get the real thing. And what is that real thing? For the common masses to rid themselves of the fetish of power. For ages they have been taught to look to a Government to do everything for them, to protect them. The Government, instead of being regarded as an instrument in their hands for their advantage, is looked up to as something beyond and apart from them which, like a deity, whether benignant or malignant, has got to be propitiated. Non-co-operation as conceived by me is ceasing to co-operate with that idea of Government and teaching the people to feel that the Government is their creation and not they creatures of the Government. I should not therefore wonder that many of the so-called advantages that we have hitherto enjoyed through the instrumentality of such a Government have to be sacrificed. If the non-co-operation was not non-violent, we would seek, as all nations in history have sought, to beat Governments with their own weapons, that is, force of arms. In such a fight it would be folly not to make use of the whole of the Government machinery. People in a violent struggle do not expect to sacrifice though they are prepared for it and, if they have at their disposal arms superior to those possessed by the Government, beat it down without any sacrifice. But in a non-violent struggle resort to arms is eschewed, and sacrifice for the moment is a necessity of the case. In practice, too, in our own struggle, ever since the September of 1920,[1] we have been sacrificing. Lawyers, schoolmasters, schoolboys, merchants, every class of people who have realized the implications of non-violent non-co-operation, have sacrificed to the measure of their ability and understanding. I know men who have lost money because they would not go to a court of law. I know cases in which the Government officials have chuckled with pride and pleasure that men who before used to gain advantages through their instrumentality were losing, but those who lost with a full knowledge of the struggle counted their loss as gain. It is my firm conviction that you cannot enter the Councils at the present moment with the present system and the administrators with their present mentality without participating in violence of an extremely bad type which is the basis of the Government of India. Take again the history of the other Governments of the world. By way of illustration I cite the Egyptian Government. They are in a fair way to attaining to what they

[1] *Vide* Vol. XVIII.

want. They have resorted to ordinary means hitherto adopted. The Egyptians are trained for the use of arms. It was open to them to take part in the Councils and all administrative machinery because they were able and willing to vindicate their position by force of arms. In India we have a state of things, so far as I am aware, without a parallel in the world. The people as a mass are neither willing nor able to take up arms. If you go to the Councils and are defeated in your purpose by the Government, you must be prepared for raising a rebellion. It cannot be successfully raised in India. Nor are the present Councillors men who can give that training to the people. My endeavour was and is to find a substitute for ordinary rebellion, and that is civil disobedience. The Councils are no training-ground even for the Councillors for civil disobedience. They believe in the "tooth for tooth" law. The sophistry, evasion and even fraud of the Government benches are returned in [their] coin. Their manifest purpose is to embarrass the Government. Their appeal is to fear. The non-co-operator's manifest purpose is never to embarrass, and his appeal must always be to the heart, therefore, to love and trust.

You evidently seem to think that mystical and religious non-co-operation can run side by side with the purely political non-co-operation of the Councils. I hold that the two are mutually destructive, and my faith in religious non-co-operation is so immutable that, if I find that it would not answer the needs of India and that the masses would not respond to it, I should be content to be alone and rely upon its ultimate invincibility to convert even the masses. Indeed, I see no escape for this world except through the acceptance of non-violence as the predominant and ordinary rule of life. The present society is ultimately based upon force. That is violence. My endeavour is no less than to get rid of this worship of force, and my conviction is that, if any country is ready for assimilating the doctrine in its entirety in a large and workable measure, it is India. And having that conviction, I have no other remedy for the needs of our country.

I think I have already said more than I wished to. It is possible to amplify what I have said, but I have no doubt that you will yourself dot the i's and cross the t's. I am almost impatient to express my opinion upon the Council-entry and kindred matters, the more so after reading your memorandum, but I am under promise to Motilalji, Hakimji and other friends not to give public expression to my views till I have met them again and discussed the whole thing. When I am free to say all that I have in view on this question and if you have time to spare

from your writings, you will see the development of the outline I have sketched above.[1]

With love,

Yours sincerely,

S. E. STOKES, ESQ.
KOTGARH
SIMLA HILLS

From a photostat : S.N. 8527

181. STATEMENT ON OPIUM POLICY

Mr. C. F. Andrews has shown me a paragraph in his writings in *Young India* regarding the opium policy of the Government of India. In that paragraph he quotes Mr. Campbell, the Government representative at the Geneva Conference held in May 1923.[2] Mr. Campbell is reported to have stated that "from the beginning India had handled the opium question with perfect honesty of purpose, and not even its most ardent opponents including Mr. Gandhi had ever made any reproach in that respect". The statement Mr. Andrews has shown me was written whilst I was a prisoner in the Yeravda Jail. Mr. Andrews tells me that, knowing my views in the matter of opium, he did not hesitate to contradict Mr. Campbell's charge against me, but in view of the importance of the matter, he wants me to state my position clearly regarding the opium policy of the Government of India. I do so gladly. I confess that my study of the opium question is very cursory, but the campaign against drink, that was taken up in 1921 with such great enthusiasm and even fierceness, was a campaign not merely against the drink curse but against all intoxicating drugs. It is true that opium was not specifically mentioned, nor were opium dens picketed, except perhaps in Assam; but those who know anything of the history of the anti-drink campaign, know that sustained agitation was led against all

[1] To this Stokes sent a lengthy rejoinder on March 25, "trying to show that, to me, it is not the actual form of the expression of our non-co-operation which would determine whether it is non-violent or not; but the spirit in which the people learn to carry it out . . . In whatever I do not agree with you, I believe you will be patient with me, and I trust that you know how profoundly I am convinced of the greatness of the work you have to do. . . ." S.N. 8581. Gandhiji's reply to this, if any, is not available.

[2] The Indian delegate at the Conference opposed the setting up of a board of inquiry by the League of Nations which would investigate and report on the quantity of opium required for strictly medicinal purposes.

manner of intoxicants not excluding even tea. During my travels in Assam, Mr. Phookan, the Assam non-co-operation leader, told me that the campaign had come to the Assamese as a blessing, because more than any other part of India Assam had a very large number of its population addicted to opium in a variety of ways. The campaign, however, Mr. Phookan said, had brought about a wholesale reform, and thousands had vowed never to touch opium. I should have thought that the severe condemnation that I have repeatedly expressed of the liquor policy of the Government would include condemnation of the whole of its policy regarding intoxicating drinks and drugs and that no separate condemnation was needed regarding opium, *ganja*, etc. If there was no ruinous and growing expenditure on an army kept not for the sake of preventing encroachments from without, but for suppressing Indian discontent due to the exploitation of India for the sake of Great Britain, there would be no revenue needed from immoral sources. In saying that India (meaning the Government of India) has handled the opium question with perfect honesty of purpose, Mr. Campbell evidently forgets that, in the interest of revenue, opium was imposed upon China by force of arms.

Young India, 20-3-1924

182. LETTER TO R. N. MANDLIK

POST ANDHERI,
March 20, 1924

DEAR MR. MANDLIK,

I have your letter.[1]

I have not seen the *Nava Kal*. I must not therefore express any opinion whatsoever. I have too great regard for Mr. Khadilkar to venture any opinion on what he might have written without knowing it and without seeing him personally about it, if I was not satisfied with it. You will therefore please excuse me for not giving any opinion on the question raised by you at the present

[1] On March 19, Mandlik had reported Khadilkar as suggesting in *Nava Kal* that if the Viceroy issued the Finance Bill, which had been rejected by the Assembly, Motilal Nehru and other Swarajist leaders should be ready for a non-co-operation movement under the leadership of Gandhiji, by March end. He asked Gandhiji if such really was the case, whether he approved of the suggestion and believed such a campaign would be successful.

moment. Will you please send me a marked copy of the *Nava Kal* referred to by you.[1]

Yours sincerely,

R. N. MANDLIK, ESQ.
"LOKAMANYA" OFFICE
207, RASTIBAI BUILDING, GIRGAUM
BOMBAY, NO. 4

From a photostat: S.N. 8544; also C.W. 5129

183. LETTER TO MANGAL SINGH

POST ANDHERI,
March 20, 1924

DEAR SARDAR MANGAL SINGH,

I was delighted to receive your letter.

I hope my telegram[2] of congratulations was duly received. I have hitherto refrained from saying anything publicly because I do not know what our friends there would wish me to do in the matter, and on receipt of your letter, I was inclined to make use of it in order to enable me to make appropriate reference to the splendid behaviour of the Jatha.[3] But doubting whether you would approve of such a step, I have framed an independent message[4] of which I enclose a copy herewith. Please keep me informed of further developments.

Please remember me to the other friends.

Yours sincerely,

SARDAR MANGAL SINGH
"AKALI-TE-PARDESI"
AMRITSAR

From a photostat: S.N. 8541; also C.W. 5127

[1] A copy of the paper appears to have been sent to Gandhiji. *Vide* "Letter to R. N. Mandlik", 28-3-1924.

[2] *Vide* "Telegram to Shukla", on or after 16-3-1924.

[3] The reference is to the second Shahidi Jatha of the Akalis which reached Gangsar Gurdwara, near Jaiton, towards the middle of March and peacefully allowed itself to be arrested.

[4] Not available

184. LETTER TO RAJ BAHADUR

POST ANDHERI,
March 20, 1924

DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,

I have your letter.

It was certainly naughty of you not to obey your father when he asked you to do a thing which was in itself pure and certainly not impure, even if your conscience would not allow you to call it pure. But after your admission that it was a mistake, father awarded punishment out of all proportion to the measure of your disobedience. When a parent denies himself something for the misdeeds of a child, it is a kind of punishment. You have not done me wrong, and there is nothing for me to pardon. Still, in order to induce father to relent and to recall his vow, you have a thousand pardons from me. Show this letter to him and let me know that he has commenced to take food offered or touched by you.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. RAJ BAHADUR
CLASS VIII, SECTION B
SANATAN DHARMA HIGH SCHOOL
ETAWAH CITY

From a photostat: S.N. 8546; also C.W. 5131

185. LETTER TO K. G. REKHADE

POST ANDHERI,
March 20, 1924

DEAR MR. REKHADE,

I have your letter of the 18th instant.[1]

I would suggest that you see Vinoba who is conducting the Satyagraha Ashram in Wardha. You would have seen him already. I know of no one more fitted to help you in the direction you wish than Vinoba. He is a disciplinarian, and discipline may be very hard, but I know that it is necessary and beneficial.

[1] This letter is not available.

With reference to the pecuniary difficulties you are labouring under, my sympathies are with you, but they are of little value. I am helpless to guide you.

Yours sincerely,

K. G. REKHADE, ESQ.
PLEADER
WARDHA

From a photostat: S.N. 8547; also C.W. 5128

186. LETTER TO SHERIF DEOJI KANJI

JUHU,
March 20, 1924

DEAR SHERIF DEOJI KANJI,

You have read to me an extract from an article in the *Kesari* to the effect that, with reference to the proposed Madrassa near Poona, you went to the Government in disregard of the fact that I was mediating between the Madrassa Trustees and the Hindus concerned in the matter. I was grieved to note that reference, and I have no hesitation in saying that so far as I am aware, you have done nothing to injure the mediation and certainly you have not gone to the Government in disregard of such mediation. I remember too that, in the course of one of our conversations, I told you that my ability for effective intervention was very slender, and that, if for nothing else, for reasons of health I could not possibly become an arbitrator. All I am doing and should still, if it was possible, like to do is to offer friendly offices. I told you therefore that you should not stop any methods that were open to you for conserving the interests of the Trust in the hope that I should ultimately be able to effect a final settlement. I told you, too, that I was hampered in my negotiation for a settlement because of the fact that I did not know the parties concerned well enough to be able to say anything with confidence. You are at liberty to make any use you like of this letter.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHERIF DEOJI KANJI, ESQ.

From a photostat: S.N. 8548

187. LETTER TO N. S. PHADKE

POST ANDHERI,
March 20, 1924

MY DEAR MR. PHADKE,

I have your letter.

The article on Continence[1] referred to by you was written by me not because I believed that India was over-populated, but because I believed that self-restraint was good in every case and much more so at a time when we were ourselves in a state of slavery. I am totally opposed to artificial means of controlling the birth-rate, and it is not possible for me to congratulate you or your co-workers on having brought into being a League whose activities, if successful, can only do great moral injury to the people. I wish I could convince you and your co-workers to disband the League and devote your energy to a better purpose. You will please pardon me for giving my opinion in such a decisive manner. I have not hesitated to do so because I know something of such activities in England and France.

Yours sincerely,

N. S. PHADKE, Esq.
HON. SECRETARY
BOMBAY BIRTH-CONTROL LEAGUE
GIRGAUM
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 8538; also C.W. 5130

[1] Presumably, the reference is to the article "In Confidence" published in *Young India*, 13-10-1920; *vide* Vol. XVIII, pp. 345-8.

188. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

POST ANDHERI,
March 20, 1924

DEAR FRIEND,

I hope you have received my letter written in reply to yours.[1] I have now another letter from you more difficult to deal with than the first because the second is a business letter.[2]

I must not make any engagements in anticipation of the completion of my convalescence. Much will depend upon how I feel then and what the position is in the country. At the end of the convalescence, I must be totally untrammelled with any previous engagements, and this in the interest of the common cause. Do you not agree? Nor must I seek to influence Sir Prabhashanker Pattani[3]. That would be going out of my beat and, after all, what is the worth of a Parishad for the holding of which the permission is obtained through the intervention of a stranger, and for purposes of the Parishad I must be considered a stranger. The proposition that no permission is required from the head of a State for holding conferences is really untenable. That ordinarily conferences are held without permission does not mean that the right of interference is waived by the head of the State concerned or that an absolute right of holding a conference accrues to the conveners. I would therefore strongly advise the conveners of the proposed conference that they should formally and courteously ask for permission. If it is refused, it may be a proper ground for leading an agitation against such decision. Why would you not write to Sir Prabhashanker? He knows you well enough to secure a favourable reply.

I hope that you will be successful in your begging mission.

I quite agree that Kathiawar educational institutions should receive aid from the Provincial Committee wherever, in its opinion, such aid is necessary.

You are quite right in stopping Devchandbhai from coming to me. The message I sent to him was that he would be welcome

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Abbas Tyabji", 15-3-1924.

[2] This largely dealt with collection of donations from the public for a political conference.

[3] Diwan of Bhavnagar. Abbas Tyabji had suggested that Gandhiji should write to Pattani for securing permission to hold the Conference at Bhavnagar.

when he came, and if he does come, I shall enlarge upon the reasons for not pressing upon me the invitation for Presidentship.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 9596

189. *INTERVIEW TO "THE TIMES OF INDIA"*

JUHU,
March 20, 1924

In answer to questions, Mr. Gandhi very willingly gave a few details of his daily routine. He gets up at four o'clock, a practice which he invariably follows. After family prayers in which the household join, he reads religious literature for a time and then goes off again in a short sleep. At six he has his breakfast of milk—Mr. Gandhi confessed with a twinkle in his eye that he was following scrupulously Colonel Maddock's instructions regarding food—and afterwards, still following his old medical advisers' advice, he takes a walk on the verandah and treats his wound to a sun-bath. Immediately after this, he attends to his correspondence, both English and Gujarati. In order to deal with the former he has been provided with shorthand typists who greatly facilitate his work. His time until midday is occupied by correspondence, the study of political problems and the seeing of important political and other friends by appointment. Early in the afternoon he has his bath and at four o'clock is ready to see the very large number of visitors who call on him.

In the evening, about six, Mr. Andrews takes him for a walk along the sea-shore, and this walk has now been prolonged to about forty minutes. The day's work is over by about eight, at which hour Mr. Gandhi usually retires for the night. He explained:

Later on, I hope to take up spinning, once I am able to sit up without fatigue.

"What do you think of the new Labour Government?" was one of the first political questions which our representative put to Mr. Gandhi. Mr. Gandhi evidently did not think much of it.

It has a precarious existence. It has to depend on the good-will of the other parties, and if it isn't to break in pieces, it has to conciliate its very exacting constituents and follow out its special domestic programme. I have no doubt that in trying to acquire the support of the majority of the House in pushing through its domestic programme, it will not hesitate to sacrifice its principles

regarding Imperial policy affecting India, or Indians in South Africa and Kenya. In fact, I should not be surprised, seeing it is so weak, if the Labour Government does worse even than its predecessors so far as Indian policy is concerned.

Mr. Gandhi concluded by admitting that he was not much perturbed over the Labour Government, because India had to rely upon her own strength and resources.

When she becomes irresistible, I have no manner of doubt that any Government, whether Labour, Conservative or Liberal, will fall in with India's demands.

On the subject of Council-entry and recent events in the Central Provinces and in the Assembly, Mr. Gandhi frankly confessed he could say nothing. The Swarajist leaders are coming down from Delhi to see him at the end of the month, and he cannot give any opinion on their actions until he has discussed the whole position with them. After having done this, he will be in a position to formulate his policy.

Interrogated regarding the Colonies Committee, which has just sailed in connection with the Kenya question, Mr. Gandhi thought that the Committee could do a great deal if it was not fettered by too many restrictions. He added:

Whether the personality of the Committee is strong enough to assert itself is very difficult to say. Speaking apart from my views as a non-co-operator, I cannot help noticing the absence of Mr. Sastri, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Mr. Andrews from the Committee. They are the men who had studied the question and know it in all its bearing, while Mr. Andrews is an expert. I cannot help saying that these omissions are glaring and inspire me with distrust as to the Committee's findings.

Mr. Gandhi gave an interesting explanation of the South African Government's decision to omit the Cape Province from the operation of the Class Areas Bill. He said :

This is merely an instance of selfishness on the part, principally, of the Dutch population. Nearly all the house-work in the Cape is done by Malay women, and if the Segregation Act came into force, these Malay women would be affected by it. This would mean depriving a major part of the white population of its domestic help, which would give no end of inconvenience. Consequently, as the Indian population of the Cape is small—about 10,000 in all—the Cape people decided that they are not worth worrying about as far as segregation is concerned in view of the difficulties which segregation would bring in its train.

In the course of the conversation, Mr. Gandhi paid a tribute to Col. Maddock—"who was more than my doctor; he is my friend"—and to Mr. Andrews—or "Charlie Bhai" as he is familiarly known—who is his right-hand man at Juhu and who writes articles incessantly from morning till night.

"I hope when India gets swaraj, you will not pack us poor but honest European journalists back home," laughingly remarked our representative. Gandhiji replied with a bright smile as he shook hands :

Nothing is farther from my mind.

The Times of India, 21-3-1924

190. LETTER TO D. V. GOKHALE

POST ANDHERI,
March 21, 1924

DEAR MR. GOKHALE,

Mr. Sherif Deoji Kanji showed me an extract from the *Kesari* in which he is charged with having gone to Government in disregard of my mediation. I was grieved to see the extract. I have given him a note[1] which probably he would publish and you would see. I observe, too, that a proper campaign has been started in the Press in connection with the matter. I wonder if all this was necessary. Is all hope of arbitration gone? Mr. Sherif Deoji Kanji told me that he and his co-trustees were ready to arbitrate. If it is at all within your power, I would like you to stop this agitation and induce the parties to consent to arbitration. I thought that you were waiting for Mr. Kelkar's return. I presume he will be back at the end of the month. I plead for patience.

Yours sincerely,

D. V. GOKHALE, ESQ.
EDITOR, "THE MAHRATTA"
POONA

From a photostat : S.N. 8553; also C.W. 5134

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Sherif Deoji Kanji", 20-3-1924.

191. LETTER TO SHEVAKRAM KARAMCHAND

POST ANDHERI,
March 21, 1924

DEAR MR. SHEVAKRAM,

I have your letter.[1]

In my opinion, God's name and God's work go hand in hand. There is no question of preference because the two are indivisible. A parrot-like repetition of the name is worse than useless, and service or action without the consciousness that it is done in God's name and for God's sake is also valueless, and if we sometimes pass our time in merely repeating the name of the deity as we have to, it is simply a course of preparation for self-dedication, that is, service for the sake of and in the name of God, and when we are thoroughly attuned, continued service in that spirit is itself equal to the repetition of the name of the deity. In the vast majority of cases, however, the setting apart a part of our time for prayer is a vital necessity. So far as I am aware, all scriptures and, certainly, the Indian scriptures, hold a guru to be absolutely indispensable, but if we cannot get a real guru, a sham substitute is not only useless but injurious. That is one of the reasons why I suppose the tenth guru established the Granth Sahib as the last Guru.

I have no spiritual guru, but believing in the institution, I have been in search of one for the last thirty years. The very search is the greatest consolation to me.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SHEVAKRAM KARAMCHAND
GURU SANGAT
HIRABAD
HYDERABAD (SIND)

From a copy: S.N. 8554; also C.W. 5135

[1] Shevakram, in his letter of March 17, had stated that according to Guru Nanak two things were essential for *mukti*, namely, prayer and a guru. He wanted to know what views Gandhiji had on the matter and also whether he had any guru.

192. LETTER TO M. REINER

POST ANDHERI,
March 21, 1924

DEAR MR. REINER,

I have your letter of the 20th instant.[1]

I shall be pleased to see you on the 26th instant at 5 p.m.

Yours sincerely,

M. REINER, ESQ.
ROOM 23, GRAND HOTEL
BALLARD ESTATE
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 8551; also C.W. 5133

193. LETTER TO GEORGE JOSEPH

POST ANDHERI,
March 21, 1924

MY DEAR JOSEPH,

I read your letter to Devdas. I hope that Mrs. Joseph is much better. I write this, however, to tell you that I hope to take charge of the editing of *Young India* from next month.[2] I am doing so not without some hesitation, but I feel I may no longer shirk the duty. I would like to know what your plans would be in the near future. I need hardly tell you that the assurance I gave you in Poona stands. If you have leisure for it, I would like you to give me a weekly article well thought out, packed with facts and written in your best style. It must not, therefore, be hurriedly written, but you should put yourself to pains for collecting information. Nothing would please me better than to have figures regarding the khaddar work, untouchability, national

[1] Reiner had introduced himself as a visitor from Australia much interested in Gandhiji's work and personality, and wanting to have a clear impression of his doctrines of which he had heard a great deal.

[2] Gandhiji resumed editorship with the issue of April 3, 1924.

education, etc., in your district. You need not send such an article to the Sabarmati address, but send it directly to me.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. GEORGE JOSEPH
CHENGANUR (TRAVANCORE)

From a photostat: S.N. 8552; also C.W. 5136

194. LETTER TO LAJAPAT RAI

POST ANDHERI,
March 21, 1924

DEAR LALAJI,

Andrews has shown me your letter to him. I have seen also Gourishanker Misra's letter to you. As you are due here on the 27th instant, I need not say anything at the present moment. When we meet, we shall discuss the special case of Gourishanker Misra and the cases of lawyers similarly placed. So far as I am concerned, I have no doubt whatsoever about the propriety of your going to Switzerland for regaining health and strength. What is the use of your remaining here with a lingering sickness and unable to make collections or to do other strenuous work for which you are specially fitted? You are going not for enjoyment but for the purpose, on your return, of doing work in your own old effective manner. You would be running away from trouble if you projected a trip round the world or went like a millionaire to see exhibitions and shows. I wish, therefore, that you would get rid of the mood of dejection and take your trip to Switzerland as part of national service.

Yours sincerely,

LALA LAJPAT RAI
LAHORE

From a photostat: S.N. 8555; also C.W. 5137

195. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

POST ANDHERI,
March 21, 1924

MY DEAR RAJAGOPALACHARI,

I hope you are still putting on weight, avoiding fever and making steady progress.

From next month, I am taking charge of *Young India* and *Navajivan*. I feel I may no longer postpone, but I do not think I shall be able myself to provide all the matter as I practically used to. Please, therefore, regard yourself as bound to send something every week. You are specializing in khaddar. Therefore, I do not mind your articles being always on that subject, but treat it from week to week in a new way, giving new facts. But, of course, I do not want you to be tied down to that alone and you may write on any other subject which you think will be of interest to the readers. I thought that I would be able by this time to write down my views on Council-entry and the Hindu-Muslim problem, but I am sorry I have not been able to do so as yet. Please do not blame me if you do find these views expressed in the columns of *Young India*. I wish you were here during the first month so that you may see everything previous to its being published, but we must do the best in the circumstances facing us. After all, it is not of much moment if I cannot avoid mistakes. I know I have the courage and wisdom to admit and correct them. There is the other side no doubt. People may be misled and it may be too late to set them right. Is not that also a part of the training?

Someone must have told you that Golikere[1] is already with me and his assistance is a great thing. He is to help me for the next three months at the most. Meanwhile Kristodas and Peari Lal[2] will try to pick up enough shorthand writing for my purpose. In any case the pressure after I go to Sabarmati or after I begin

[1] Gandhiji's stenographer

[2] Pyarelal Nayyar, Gandhiji's secretary, since 1920, and biographer

to travel will not be so great. The bulk of the steady writing I want to finish during convalescence.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. C. RAJAGOPALACHARI
THE EXTENSION
SALEM

From a photostat: S.N. 8556; also C.W. 5132

196. INTERVIEW TO "LIVERPOOL POST" AND "MERCURY"

[*March 21, 1924*]

Today I talked for over an hour with Gandhi. Somewhere outside the verandah hovered his son, and C. F. Andrews, an Englishman who espoused the cause of the African Indian and whose long beard and native garments and bare feet proclaimed one voluntarily quitting his own caste. Despite the countless visits which the Swarajists inflict upon Gandhi, I gained the impression that his gentle spirit is chastened through long imprisonment and illness. Gandhi admitted repeatedly the breakdown of that strange creed of his by which he hoped to make India a nation such as this materialistic world never saw—simple and non-violent, maintaining independence amidst opportunist Asia by the quality which he called "soul-force".

Now that they in the Legislative Assembly have voted down the Government's demand for money grants, they want Gandhi's consent to a campaign of civil disobedience throughout India which means an agitation against the payment of all taxes. It is known that Gandhi originally opposed participation in these Government Assemblies and cast no favourable eye on the Swarajist game of obstruction. But the Swarajist success has taken the country by storm, and the leader who made the swaraj movement before other politicians were heard of must bow to the reputation formed while he was in prison.

Civil disobedience is always an advisable weapon when governments are not based on the will of the people, but it is practicable only when the masses are imbued with a spirit of non-violence.

Gandhi remarked:

India is now ready for swaraj if granted, but India is unable to seize swaraj, either by force, which I oppose, or by disciplined non-violence.

Gandhi then defined swaraj :

It means Parliamentary Government, but I hope not in the sense of Western nations where selfish interest reigns supreme. It means also the return to India's ancient life. Despite years of sneering, I still believe that the home spinning-wheel can oust the British factory. If so, how can British capital, which is the sole reason for British dominion, expect compensation? Myself, I do not believe in a tariff wall against foreign imports.

Concerning the famous triple boycott against British courts, schools and Councils, Gandhi was pessimistic. He said he would now organize panchayats or courts of arbitration, resembling Sinn Fein tribunals, by which suits would be settled outside the King's writ. Concerning the schools, Gandhi hoped only to make the non-Government institutions more attractive. Asked what advantages the curriculum of swaraj schools had over Government schools, Gandhi said they teach freedom of thought, whereas the British schools inculcate only fixed rules which fit the natives for service under the present regime. Gandhi declared that such schools as on the Western plan make of the natives automatons. He added that a complete boycott of British goods would drive the British from India; but he admitted that the time was not yet ripe.

Asked to state what hopes he had of early attainment of swaraj, Gandhi answered only in the negative. From experience in England, when he was a student . . . he declared that Labour would think first of British constituencies, last of all, [of] India. But on hopes from the present Swarajist obstruction in the Assembly, Gandhi was ominously silent. He thought the British, whom he did not regard as a bad people, would eventually hit upon an honourable agreement, and declared that he had good reason for this hope.

Passing to the matter of the army, he announced that he would reduce this to a fourth of its present establishment, and would change the whole railway system, which he thought followed too closely upon strategic lines.

"You have no enemies to fear?" Gandhi was asked. He replied:

We fear the Afghans. Once the Hindu-Muslim unity [is] established, the Amir of Afghanistan would not attack fellow-Muslims. If Russia attacks us, we expect the militaristic nations of Europe to come to our aid to prevent Russia becoming too strong, and we should welcome help. What do I think of the present rulers of Russia? I take them at their face value. What builds on force ends by force.

"Do the Indian masses understand your preachings on non-violence when at the same time they are told the British have done wrong?" I asked him. Gandhi replied :

Yes, but nowhere outside India would this be possible. You Westerners are unable to understand this, but it is the spirit of the Indian people.

Asked if his attitude was unchanged regarding the "evils" of Western civilization, Gandhi replied that he would not abolish the railways since they were already established; he approved of modern farm implements since Indian agriculturists needed help. Concerning the British factories, he hoped the spinning-wheel would prove their doom.

I asked Gandhi concerning Kemal Pasha's deposition of the Khalif. Gandhi replied that it did not affect Hindu-Muslim unity which, however, he confessed was not so strong as formerly. On this unity all resistance to the British depended.

The King of the Hedjaz won't do. All Islam feels he is a British representative.

Gandhi declared that India is suffering a grave disadvantage as the natives have been "emasculated" as soldiers since the British came to India.

What I want to end is the Indian's mortal fear of the white skin which was more prevalent when I was a boy than now.

The Hindu, 14-4-1924

197. *ADDRESS TO STUDENTS AND TEACHERS, BOMBAY*[1]

[March 21, 1924]

I need not say that I am pleased to see you all today. I am thankful to you for the little presents offered to me by you. Two at least of your presents convey a special meaning to me at present. The mat for carding and the slivers prepared by you remind me that I must immediately take up the work of spinning and carding. I assure you that when I am engaged in doing that work, I feel swaraj approaching nearer and nearer. Therefore, I request you all to pray for my complete and immediate recovery in order that I may be able to take up that work as early as possible. I desire that you also should devote yourselves to the spinning-wheel and I am sure you will also feel that it brings Swaraj nearer and nearer. If we concentrate upon the constructive programme, we are sure to get all we want. You must have heard the beautiful song of Poet Narasinh Mehta sung by Lalitji. I wish you understand the meaning

[1] A party of students and teachers of the Bombay Rashtriya Shala met Gandhiji at Juhu. They presented him with an address and some articles of handicraft prepared by them.

of such religious songs, and I appeal to you that you will make all efforts to translate the noble ideals of such poems into your actions. But I warn you that even for teachers it is a very difficult thing to act according to the ideals inculcated in these beautiful songs.

I remember that when I first visited your school, I told you that you had to learn much in the art of music. Today I again have heard some of the students singing, but I am sorry to remark that you have not as yet made sufficient progress to earn my certificate. Still, however, I do hope that when I next visit your school after my complete recovery, you will make yourself fit for passing—though complete mastery over that art may not be possible for you even then.

The Hindu, 26-3-1924

198. MESSAGE TO SOUTH AFRICAN EUROPEANS

[Before *March 22, 1924*][1]

If you continue to oppress us, we shall leave your Empire and, if we do, where will your Empire be then?

The Hindu, 26-3-1924

199. LETTER TO DWIJENDRANATH TAGORE

ANDHERI,
March 22, 1924

DEAR BORODADA,

It was good of you to send me two copies of your essays on the *Bhagavad Gita*. I note with gratitude your affectionate inscription in one copy. I shall prize it and endeavour at the earliest opportunity to understand your interpretation of the message of the *Gita*.

Mr. Andrews always gives me your kind messages. His presence is a great comfort to me. It was so good of you to have let him come to me.

With much respect,

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 8564

[1] Sarojini Naidu quoted this in the course of a speech at a gathering at Cape Town on March 22.

200. LETTER TO R. PIGGOTT AND A. M. WARD

POST ANDHERI,
March 22, 1924

DEAR MISSES PIGGOTT AND WARD,

I have your letter[1] of the 16th instant.

I am ashamed to say that I have entirely forgotten the interview mentioned by you. However, I am sending your letter to a friend in Sindh who, if he can see his way, I am sure, will assist you. You will please excuse me if I have not addressed you correctly. I showed your letter to Mr. Andrews. He distinctly remembers having met you, but cannot give me any information about you.

Yours sincerely,

MISS R. PIGGOTT AND MISS A. M. WARD
HYDERABAD (SINDH)

From a photostat: S.N. 8562; also C.W. 5140

201. LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

POST ANDHERI,
March 22, 1924

MY DEAR JAIRAMDAS,

I enclose herewith a letter[1] received from Sindh. Probably you know the ladies. As you will note, they ask me to bring their activity to the notice of those who have much to give. I do not put you under that category, but I thought I should pass the letter on to you so that, if it is a deserving activity, at least it does not remain without any notice by us. You will, therefore, please write to me and let me know what exactly this activity is and what you think of it. I do not want you to go out of your way to make inquiries. There is no hurry about the matter. I know that every moment of true workers is too precious to be spent in anything but the task immediately before them.

Lalaji is coming to Andheri on the 27th instant.

[1] This is not available.

I am sorry I have not yet been able to frame the draft statement regarding Council-entry and Hindu-Muslim unity. I am afraid, therefore, that you will not see it before publication as I had hoped you would, but you will see it only after it is published.

Yours sincerely,

Enclosure
JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM, ESQ.
HYDERABAD (SINDH)

From a photostat: S.N. 8560; also C.W. 5139

202. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

ANDHERI,
Saturday, March 22, 1924

DEAR RAJAGOPALACHARI,

This is hand-made paper. I understand it was specially got and printed for me. I am using it for the first time today. It is now after 3.30 a.m. I have hardly slept during the night after 12. You are one of the reasons. I had a chat with your son last night. Incidentally, I asked him whether he wrote to you and you to him in English or Tamil. When he told me it was English, the information cut me to pieces. We had then a discourse upon the possibilities of Tamil. Young Ramaswamy thought that it was not capable of being used for high and scientific thought. My brain then began to work and it is still working. You are my greatest hope. Why this, as it seems to me, grave defect? If the salt loses its savour, etc. What are the Tamil masses to do, if her best sons neglect her? What is the future before poor Ramaswamy as a worker among the masses? Do enlighten me or promise henceforth to write to the young man in your best Tamil. It was good of the *Hindu* people to offer to lend services of the shorthand-writer.

With deepest love,

Yours,
M. K. G.

From a photostat: S.N. 8566

203. LETTER TO MRS. EMMA HARKER

POST ANDHERI,
March 22, 1924

DEAR MRS. HARKER,

I have your letter.[1] The sad note about it grieves me. The progress continues. Could you come on Tuesday next at 5 p.m.?

Yours sincerely,

MRS. E. HARKER
C 3, DATUBHOY MANSIONS
MAYO ROAD
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 8563; also C.W. 5138

204. LETTER TO ROMAIN ROLLAND[2]

ANDHERI,
March 22, 1924

DEAR FRIEND,

I appreciate your loving card. What does it matter that you have in places made mistakes in your essay? The wonder to me is that you have made so few and that you have succeeded, though living in a different and distant atmosphere, in so truly interpreting my message. It demonstrates once more the essential oneness of human nature though flourishing under different skies.

With much regard,

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

Pray excuse the pencil hand. My hand is yet too shaky to manage the ink-pen.

M. K. G.

M. ROMAIN ROLLAND

From a photostat: S.N. 8565

[1] This read: "I am going through rather a critical and sad time and ask you to pray for me. I know I shall find comfort in seeing you." S.N. 8549

[2] Romain Rolland had written to Mahadev Desai on February 24: "If I have unconsciously committed a few mistakes in the little book that I have

205. *STATEMENT TO PRESS*[1]

BOMBAY,
March 23, 1924

The following cablegram has been received from Cape Town signed by Mr. Pather, General Secretary, South African Indian Congress :

> South African Indian community submits notwithstanding strongest protests Union Government determined carrying through Class Areas Bill violating pledges given. Bill indefensible. Foreigners, also Euro-Africans, Malays and Natives being exempted. Bill will apply only to Indians. Euro-Africans, Malays, and Natives assembled in thousands Cape Town assured Mrs. Sarojini Naidu of support to Indians in opposition to Bill. Indians will never submit segregation. Inform India. Please take such action as you think best. Mrs. Sarojini Naidu has made deep impression and won many hearts. Mrs. Naidu deferred leaving South Africa until 30th April owing great demand on her in interest of the cause.

This is startling news, almost too bad even for South Africa to be believed. I have already endeavoured to show why the Cape was to be excluded from the operation of the measure. If the information cabled by Reuter as to the exclusion of the Cape is correct, there is something wrong in the foregoing cable, or the information contained in it is applicable to the other three Provinces only, namely, Orangia, Transvaal and Natal. The position will be that, so far as the Cape is concerned, the Cape Indians will still remain exempted from the operation of the measure, whereas in the other Provinces the measure will apply only to Indians. There is no difficulty about understanding the exemptions, because the idea of segregation of Natives and Malays in the extreme sense is new. Every European household has Natives of South Africa as domestic servants. Malays, as I have shown in a previous com-

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dedicated to him, let Mahatma excuse me—for the sake of the great love and veneration that his life and philosophy have inspired in me. A European may often be deceived in his judgement about an individual or a nation of Asia. But his heart cannot be deceived, when he finds in them the common God and universal love. As our European Mahatma—Beethoven—sings in his 'Ode to Joy', let us millions of human beings embrace each other." S.N. 8573

[1] This was published generally in the Press. *Young India* reproduced it under the title "The Class Areas Bill".

munication[1], are a negligible quantity except in the Cape. We have, therefore, the naked truth before us that the Bill in question is aimed merely at Indians and that it connotes not only segregation but indirect expulsion. Mrs. Sarojini Naidu's visit to South Africa and her inspiring presence there will undoubtedly steel the hearts of the Indian settlers for further effort. Her presence is also bringing Europeans and Indians on the same platform. Let India, however, not be lulled into a sense of false security because of the commanding presence of Mrs. Naidu in the midst of the sorely-tried Indian settlers. After all, the cultured Europeans of South Africa are gentlemen, and I have little doubt that Mrs. Naidu is receiving all the attention that is due to her for her many and matchless gifts, but the South African Europeans have also a fixed and determined anti-Indian policy. General Smuts is a finished diplomat. On due occasions he can speak honeyed words, but he knows his mind, and let there be no mistake that unless India can make an effort adequate to the situation, the Bill will be carried through the Union Parliament in spite of Mrs. Naidu's resourcefulness.

M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 27-3-1924

206. *LETTER TO S. A. BRELVI*

POST ANDHERI,
March 23, 1924

DEAR MR. BRELVI,

I thank you for your note.

That, in spite of the unanimous public opinion so emphatically expressed demanding the removal of the ban against Mr. Horniman, the Government should remain adamant is to me an index at once of our weakness and the Government's studied defiance of public opinion so strongly and unanimously expressed as in Mr. Horniman's case. Assuming for the sake of argument that we are in error in demanding the removal of the ban, it is evident that the Government will not leave us room even for making mistakes. The only use, therefore, of our public meetings is to show Mr. Horniman that his services are not forgotten and that, if he has not received the passport to return, it is not for want of will on our part

[1] *Vide* "Anti-Indian Campaign in South Africa", 14-2-1924.

but for sheer want of ability. Even that is no small use. I therefore wish your meeting every success.[1]

Yours sincerely,

S. A. BRELVI, ESQ.
"BOMBAY CHRONICLE"
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 8567; also C.W. 5142

207. LETTER TO D. R. MAJLI

POST ANDHERI,
March 23, 1924

MY DEAR MAJLI,

Early in the morning my first thought went out to you, and I asked myself how I could help you to be yourself again. Belgaum is to have the honour of holding the next Congress Session.[2] I know you want to take your part in the preparations. I know also that you are one of the best of workers. All that you need do is to become perfectly calm and get rid of excitement. I fear that you have been thinking too much, in the jail, of our country's troubles; but it would not do for us merely to be thinking of the troubles. What are we? We should leave all the cares to God. Ours is to do our level best in lightening the burdens of India. Have you ever read Tulsidas's *Ramayana*? If you do not know Hindi fairly well, probably you have not read it. The great saint wrote his *Ramayana*, in my opinion, to glorify Rama's name. For me it has been a talisman. My nurse, whom I used to love as my mother, and in whose company much more of my time was passed in childhood than in my mother's, used to tell me that if I thought of evil spirits at night and dreaded them, I could ward them off by repeating the name of Rama. Having faith in the nurse, I followed her prescription, and whenever at night vague fears seized hold of me, I used to recite the sacred name, and it answered the purpose.[3] As I grew old, the faith weakened. My mentor, the nurse, was dead. I ceased to take the name of Rama,

[1] This paragraph constitutes the message which was read at a meeting of the Journalists' Association at the *Voice of India* Office, Bombay, on March 25; K. Natarajan, editor of *The Indian Social Reformer*, presided.

[2] This was held in December 1924 under Gandhiji's presidentship.

[3] *Vide An Autobiography*, Pt. I, Ch. X.

and my fears revived. In the jail I read the *Ramayana* with greater attention and still greater devotion than ever before, and whenever I felt lonely or felt the pride in me rising and telling me that I could do something for India, to give me due humility and to make me experience the presence of the Almighty, and thus to remove my loneliness, I used calmly to recite the name Rama with all the halo that Tulsidas has surrounded it with. I cannot put in words the indescribable peace that then came on me. As you know, Mr. Banker[1] was torn away from me for some time. When he rejoined me, he related his own experiences to me. He used to experience all kinds of dreadful things after the cell-door was cruelly locked upon him. But he related to me graphically how the recitation of the name calmed him and gave him strength also to shed all those unbecoming fears. I, therefore, send you the much-tried prescription. Think, whenever you feel you are excited, of Rama and the peace-giving nature of the recitation. Continue to recite the name slowly, forgetting everything, and considering yourself as one of the tiniest atoms in the mighty universe, and God willing the excitement will subside, and you will experience a blissful peace. The sages of old knew from experience what they were saying when they prescribed for troubled souls *Ramanama, Dwadash Mantra*[2] and such other things. The more I think of them, the more true all those *mantras* appear to me today. I wish you could have faith enough to repeat *Ramanama* or such *mantra* which memory might have hallowed for you, and I know that you will soon be yourself again.

Yours sincerely,

[PS.]

You know that you owe me a letter. I wrote immediately in reply to your postcard. I await your acknowledgement of my letter.[3]

SJT. D. R. MAJLI
BELGAUM

From a copy : C.W. 5141. Courtesy : Krishnadas

[1] Shankerlal Banker, who was his co-prisoner in Yeravda

[2] A sacred formula of 12 syllables: *Om Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya*

[3] Majli wrote a postcard in reply, which was published in *Young India*; *vide* "Notes", 3-4-1924.

208. LETTER TO GANGADHARRAO B. DESHPANDE

POST ANDHERI,
March 23, 1924

MY DEAR GANGADHARRAO,

I was thinking this morning very early what I could do to help Majli. The result was a letter of which I send you a copy.[1]

Yours sincerely,

SJT. GANGADHARRAO B. DESHPANDE
BELGAUM

From a photostat : S.N. 8568; also C.W. 5143

209. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

Monday [On or before *March 24, 1924*][2]

CHI. MANI,

Bhai Manilal told me today that you are now free from fever, but still very weak and are living at Dr. Kanuga's. I should like you to come over here, if father and the doctor permit. Here you will have both rest and peace of mind, and will soon recover your strength. And then, I shall be able to take work from you. Neither you nor your father need fear that you will be a burden to me. For you will be a burden only to the floor, and the floor is pretty strong and capable of bearing the weight of a hundred girls like you! Another [person] on whom the burden will fall is the cook. But Revashankerbhai has given us a stalwart cook as strong as the floor itself! If you come here, I shall be free from anxiety on your account. For every man or woman engaged in the service of the nation and falling ill away from me adds to my worry. If they are under my observation, I would be free from worry to that extent.

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] The letter appears to have been written on a Monday prior to March 25, the date on which Gandhiji wrote to Mahomed Ali referring to the ailment of Manibehn Patel.

I am sure Dahyabhai is giving more time to spinning to make up for your not spinning.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne, p. 12

210. APPEAL TO THE PUBLIC[1]

JUHU,
March 24, 1924

DEAR BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I address this appeal to such of you as come to see me daily, or intend doing so.

I appealed to you sometime ago through the Press that those of you who must see me may do so between the hours of 4 and 5 in the evening. You are either not aware of this or come before or after these hours just because you cannot help coming. The result is sad for me. The little service that it is given to me to render is disturbed.

The capital of energy at my disposal is very small, and I want to utilize it only in service. I wish to resume editorship of *Navajivan* and *Young India* from next week. And I need absolute quiet for that work. If all my time and energy are taken up in seeing and entertaining you, it will not be possible for me to edit the weeklies in the way I desire.

Moreover, seeing me is not likely to be of any benefit to you. It is an indication of your love for me, but it is an exaggerated indication. The love itself is a great force, and I would have you apply that force not to seeing me, but to the service of the people. I would have you send me on all the money that you have to expend on a visit to me for being spent on the production and propagation of khaddar. I would have you devote all the time a visit to me would take up to all or any of the following objects :

(1) Spinning or carding and making slivers;

(2) Khaddar propaganda;

(3) Teaching spinning or carding to your friends and neighbours.

[1] This open letter, the original of which was in Gujarati, was published generally in the Press.

To such of those as are not prepared to do any of these things and still cannot restrain themselves from seeing me I would appeal to restrict their visits to the time between 5 and 6 on all evenings *except Monday*, my day of silence—when I cannot possibly see any visitor. It is evident that I cannot see them individually. I shall have to ask them to be satisfied with seeing me all at a time.

I may also request intending visitors to bring with them yarn spun by them or money for khaddar work. The yarn will be turned into khaddar and the money used for khaddar production.

I shall feel grateful if you will kindly accept my request and all the time thus saved will be saved for the service of the country.

I am,
Your faithful servant,
M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 27-3-1924

211. LETTER TO D. V. GOKHALE

ANDHERI,
March 24, 1924

DEAR MR. GOKHALE,

I thank you for your letter. I understand your position. But I do think that the trustees' approach to the Government is consistent with their readiness to go to arbitration. I promise not to misunderstand you. I may be grieved over certain actions and yet respect honest differences of opinion.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

As you had marked your letter private and confidential, I have destroyed it.

M. K. G.

From a photostat: S.N. 8576

212. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

Monday, March 24, 1924

MY DEAR RAJAGOPALACHARI,

The son has begun before the father. That is as it should be. You can see how the discovery has preyed on my mind.

I had a long chat with Natarajan[1] and Jayakar. They are coming again tomorrow. I wish I could write out the statement[2] and let you see it before it goes to the Press. I shall make an effort but may fail. The uninvited visitors take away much of my time. I am trying to cope with the evil.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 8577

213. LETTER TO K. G. REKHADE

POST ANDHERI,
March 25, 1924

DEAR MR. REKHADE,

I have your letter. I do not think you will be satisfied with the Ashram life in Sabarmati. All attention there is today concentrated upon the development of hand-spinning and hand-weaving. The literary side of the Ashram takes the background. Though, therefore, there is a very good library attached to the Ashram, I cannot say that the atmosphere is favourable for philosophical studies. One cannot be reading and thinking whilst all around one are away working for all that they are worth. The Ashram has been given that turn because I am convinced that we have had an overdose of philosophical and political studies. The faculty of working with our hands and feet is all but atrophied. An attempt is being made at the Ashram to revive the taste for hand labour. Nor is it possible at the Ashram to provide for your

[1] K. Natarajan

[2] This was presumably one on Council-entry and Hindu-Muslim unity which Gandhiji was contemplating at the time.

financial wants. Have you met Jamnalalji? He might be able to guide you.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. G. REKHADE
WARDHA (C.P.)

From a photostat: S.N. 8582; also C.W. 5144

214. *LETTER TO MAHOMED ALI*

POST ANDHERI,
March 25, 1924

MY DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER,

I have your letter[1]. I am following your movement through the papers, and I see that you have borne the domestic affliction[2] with the courage and resignation worthy of you. I had myself expected nothing less. I regard it as a privilege of friendship to receive the account you have given me of Amina's last moments. She was a dear good soul. It would be exceedingly good if you could pass a week with me. I would love to have you, Begum Saheba and the whole of your suite, but the accommodation in this big bungalow is now limited. I could easily take care of you, that is to say, you will be left to take care of yourself and make yourself as comfortable as it is possible in a place that has been turned into an hospital. I am lying in the midst of patients. Maganlal's daughter Radha and Vallabhbhai's daughter Manibai are both here and they are much weaker than I am myself. Prabhudas though not bed-ridden is also an invalid, and I have invited mad Majli too to come here. And how I would love to nurse the Big Brother also. But that can only be after convalescence. Let there be no mistake about the motive in having all these patients here. You may know that I am a better nurse than a politician, if I am one at all, and what is more, I felt ashamed to be occupying a big bungalow like this all alone when there were patients, some of whom, brought up under me from infancy, requiring far greater care, attention and change than I did. They are all here, therefore, not for my consolation but for their own good; but having turned the bungalow into an hospital, I have disabled myself for looking after guests, whom I would not

[1] This is not available.

[2] The reference is to the death of Amina, Mahomed Ali's daughter.

have if I could not give them the attention they deserve. And while I should be quite glad to leave you to yourself, and feel that I have done enough, I could not feel likewise regarding Begum Saheba.

Now you know all about me. Tell me when you are coming. I wish you were here to join the discussions with the leaders who are coming over in the course of the week. Please tell Shaukat he had no right to be bed-ridden. The next best thing for him to do is to get well quickly.

How is Hayat? He owes me a letter.

With love to you all,

Yours affectionately,

MAULANA MAHOMED ALI
ALIGARH

From a photostat: S.N. 8584; also C.W. 5345

215. LETTER TO CHILDREN OF FREEDOM SOCIETY

POST ANDHERI,
March 25, 1924

DEAR BOYS,

I was so delighted to receive the parcel containing yarn spun by you continuously for seven days and nights. It was a very happy idea. I am sure that, if boys of all the National Schools were to put forth the same zeal that you have, we should be much nearer swaraj than we are today.

Hoping you will religiously set apart a certain time for spinning every day,[1]

Your well-wisher,

THE MEMBERS OF THE CHILDREN OF FREEDOM SOCIETY
NATIONAL SCHOOL
DHARWAR

From a photostat: S.N. 8585; also C.W. 5149

[1] *Vide* also "Notes", 3-4-1924.

216. LETTER TO RAGINI DEVI

POST ANDHERI,
March 25, 1924

DEAR SRIMATI RAGINI DEVI,

I thank you for your kind letter[1] of the 11th February and the interesting cutting containing your article on Indian music.

I thank you for your kind inquiry about my health, and I am glad to be able to tell you and other friends who are interested in it that I am making steady progress towards complete recovery.

Yours sincerely,

SRIMATI RAGINI DEVI
1240, UNION STREET
BROOKLYN
NEW YORK

From a photostat : S.N. 8586; also C.W. 5148

217. LETTER TO S. A. BRELVI

POST ANDHERI,
March 25, 1924

DEAR MR. BRELVI,

I have now glanced through the synopsis of Professor Shah's novel. I wish I had time for going through the whole work in manuscript which he has kindly offered to lend me. In view of the fact that I am resuming editorship of *Navajivan* and *Young India*, I feel I must deny myself the pleasure. Every available moment must remain mortgaged for that purpose until I regain my own energy, if I ever do. Do you want me to return the synopsis?

Devdas has written to you about your letter. I need not confirm what he has said —that you will be welcome whenever you

[1] Ragini Devi had written on February 11, emphasizing constant American interest in Gandhiji and his interpretation, and seeking his blessings for her work of popularizing Indian music in the United States.

come. Do please pass a whole day here. The place is certainly delightful and you will like it.

Yours sincerely,

S. A. BRELVI, ESQ.
"BOMBAY CHRONICLE"
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 8587; also C.W. 5147

218. *LETTER TO DR. SATYAPAL*

POST ANDHERI,
March 25, 1924

DEAR DR. SATYAPAL,

I was glad to receive your letter giving me so much information about tension between Hindus and Muslims. I await the second instalment regarding Sikhs and Hindus with interest. I know that the problem before the country is very serious and very complex, and in our ability to solve it satisfactorily and permanently lies the road to swaraj. I have been thinking over it day and night ever since my release, and as soon as I have seen the leaders, I shall begin to write upon it.

I thank you for your inquiry about my health. I am making steady progress. I observe you are not now in Amritsar, but in Lahore. Why the change?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. SATYAPAL
LAHORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 10460; also C.W. 5146

219. TELEGRAM TO BALIBEHN VORA

[After *March 26, 1924*][1]

BALIBEHN
CARE HARIDAS VORA
RAJKOT

SEND KANTI ASHRAM TODAY.

BAPU

From a photostat : S.N. 8588

220. INTERVIEW TO "THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"

JUHU,
March 27, 1924

He said he was satisfied with the progress and, though he needed much rest, he had resumed his practice of getting up at four o'clock in the morning. To a further question he replied that he had already begun the indispensable work of spinning. As for the books he had written in the Jail, he gave our representative to understand that the History of Satyagraha in South Africa would be soon published by the Navajivan Publishing House, while the text books for children were made over to the Gujarat Vidyapith authorities for publication.

Pointing out *The Times of India's* leaderette on Mrs. Naidu entitled "Mrs. Naidu's Poetics", our representative asked Mahatmaji what he thought of Mrs. Naidu's mission.

I am sorry to see *The Times of India's* leaderette. All the charges levelled against Mrs. Naidu in the leaderette are really answered in the special cable to *The Times of India* published in the same issue. All cable messages, being a summary of speeches or writings, have to be taken with the greatest caution.

Illustrating this from his own life, as rich in varied experiences as in suffering, he said :

I was myself lynched in Durban[2] because Reuter had cabled in 1896 a summary in a few sentences of a pamphlet[3] I wrote in

[1] This was written on the reverse of the telegram received from Kitchlew, dated March 26, 1924.
[2] *Vide* Vol. II, pp. 209-10.
[3] ibid., pp. 1-52.

India describing the position of Indians in Natal. It was not a conscious misrepresentation; nevertheless the intensive condensation of a 30-page octavo-size pamphlet gave a very inaccurate account of what I had written. The Europeans of Natal, when they understood what I had already stated in India, repented of the wrong they had done me.

Referring to the "Message from Mr. Gandhi" facetiously alluded to by the *Times*, Mahatmaji observed :

My message to Mrs. Naidu was published in the *Times* and other newspapers. I am inclined to believe that Mrs. Naidu has undoubtedly made a forcible, but in no sense irritating, speech. She is too shrewd not to understand the gravity of the situation in South Africa. The special cable to the *Times* would almost go to show that, if anything, she is too conciliatory. For instance, she is said to have admitted that there is some economic menace owing to the low standard of certain classes of Indians. It can be proved that their mode of life is no worse than that of the retail traders of the same standing. I am not giving my own testimony but that of Europeans. Nor can it be a grievance against Indians that they sent money to India. It can be proved from statistics that Europeans sent out of South Africa ever so much more than Indians. I should not be at all surprised if the full statement made by Mrs. Naidu to the *Times* correspondent has clauses qualifying the statements. Anyway, according to the *Times* view of things, if she has erred, she has erred on the right side. I have no fear whatsoever of her presence in South Africa doing any harm to India by her unguarded language.

The interview which was gradually drifting to grave political problems was at this stage enlivened by the appearance of Mr. Andrews in khadi shirt and dhoti with a copy of the latest London *Punch* in his hand. "You are now immortalized, Mahatmaji, if you are not already so," humorously remarked Mr. Andrews with a broad smile.

"Here is 'Charivaria' in *Punch* about you," said he, handing over the number of *Punch* to Mahatmaji.

Gandhiji replied as he briskly noted the contents:

I am indeed immortalized, all the more so for the reasons that the reference to me occurs on the very first page and just after the picture of Pussy.

And then followed a loud burst of laughter ringing in the gallery, attracting the attention of two patients resting at a small distance.

Asked as to what he thought of the non-payment of the Poll-tax organized by the Kenya Indians, Mahatmaji replied :

As the Poll-tax affected only 4,000 Indians, its non-payment is not calculated to develop into a sharp struggle. It is, however, bound to result in securing discipline and order amongst the Indians, though it does not involve intense suffering. Europeans must feel that Indians are determined and would no longer submit to injustice.

Pointing to Mr. Sastri's attitude, he said that Indians here must continue to give their moral support even as Indians in Kenya must persevere in the struggle.

Further asked as to what he thought of the Congress proceedings of the past two years, Mahatmaji frankly confessed that he had not been able to study the Congress proceedings of the past two years.

Current events so much occupy such time as my feeble health allows me to spare. But even if I had leisure to study the Congress literature during the past two years, I should hesitate to judge or criticize the action of my co-workers. It is so easy to be wise after the event. But it is not equally easy to come to a just decision. But I have faith enough in the probity, single-mindedness and devotion of the principal Congress workers whether they were for entering the Councils or against. It was an honest difference of opinion. Such honest differences will remain so long as we are what we are. In my opinion, it is a healthy sign when people refuse to surrender their opinions for the sake of achieving a superficial unity.

Our representative further asked, "I have noticed your remarks about the Labour Government's Indian policy in the *Times*. Would you give the same opinion even if the Labour Government were in power with an overwhelming majority?"

I do not think I should much alter my view because, even with an overwhelming majority, unless a Labour Government places principles before popularity, it will be difficult for it to shoulder a really liberal measure for India without risking its domestic policy.

As the talk drifted to the political events of the past two years, Mahatmaji expressed his profound satisfaction at the result of the Borsad satyagraha and remarked :

The lesson that Borsad satyagraha teaches is of inestimable importance. Whilst it is true that the Government of Bombay deserved to be complimented upon its reasonableness and sagacity

in truly sizing up the situation, the Borsad satyagrahis by their utter non-violence, determination and the justice of their cause, made themselves invincible. And if it was possible to organize a whole taluka for successful satyagraha in respect of a small and particular evil, it must be possible to organize satyagraha on a larger scale in respect of a general and deep-seated evil. The only thing required is sufficient workers with an unquenchable faith in their cause and their means. Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel himself had that faith and he had workers who were infected with the same faith.

Asked as to what he thought of doing after he fully gained his health, Mahatmaji said that would depend upon the situation that might face the country at that time.

I have no settled programme of work after the completion of my convalescence. As I want to hold myself free for any emergencies that may arise, I am accepting no appointments in advance.

The Bombay Chronicle, 29-3-1924

221. LETTER TO GANGADHARRAO B. DESHPANDE

POST ANDHERI,
March 27, 1924

MY DEAR GANGADHARRAO,

I read a paragraph in *The Mahratta* saying that Mangalore people are still disputing the resolution of the Karnatak Provincial Congress Committee fixing the Congress venue at Belgaum. Is it a fact and, if it is, please give me some details and tell me also whether I can help in any way. You may also give me the names of parties who are agitating for a reversal of the Committee's decision.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. GANGADHARRAO B. DESHPANDE
BELGAUM

From a photostat: S.N. 8590; also C.W. 5158

222. *LETTER TO T. A. SUBRAMANIA ACHARY*

POST ANDHERI,
March 27, 1924

MY DEAR SUBRAMANIA,

I was delighted to hear from you from Durban.

I thank you for your good wishes and inquiry. I am making slow but steady progress towards complete recovery. You need not feel sorry about your inability to serve your country. I cannot ask you to be spinning there, but you can certainly make use of khaddar so far as it is possible even there, and out of your spare earnings you can contribute to the public funds required for carrying on the struggle at home.

Yours sincerely,

T. A. SUBRAMANIA ACHARY, ESQ.
175, UMGENI ROAD
DURBAN

From a photostat : S.N. 8591

223. *LETTER TO OMEO K. DAS*

POST ANDHERI,
March 27, 1924

DEAR MR. DAS,

I have your letter. I do not know whether it is to be published in Assamese or Hindi. In order not to delay the matter, I send you the following in English:

The only thing I can think of at the present moment as a remedy for our ills is for every one of us to take up the spinning-wheel or some activity directly connected with it such as carding, making slivers, hawking of khaddar, collecting cotton, distributing it, etc. I know that the universal spread of the charkha is indispensable for swaraj.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. OMEO K. DAS
EDITOR
"THE ASSAMIYA"
DIBRUGARH (UPPER ASSAM)

From a photostat : S.N. 8593; also C.W. 5151

224. *LETTER TO GEORGE JOSEPH*

POST ANDHERI,
March 27, 1924

MY DEAR JOSEPH,

Here is a letter[1] which speaks for itself. Will you kindly let me know what the facts are, and if it is a fact that you have threatened civil disobedience, the grounds for it.

I am sorry that you have not yet been able to get any conclusive report about Mrs. Joseph's illness. Patients are indeed kings, as you say in your letter to Devdas, but they form a huge confederacy, and decent ones live under one rule without their kingly glory in any way being diminished. But I have so filled this place that even if Mrs. Joseph could be persuaded to come here, I am afraid she would not feel comfortable. I have already Radha, Mani Ben, Kiki Ben, Prabhudas, and I make the fifth. I invited mad Majli to join me here even whilst I was in Poona, and he may come if he is at all capable of being moved. Will you care to put her under Dr. Jivraj Mehta's treatment in the State Hospital at Baroda? I would like you to consider the proposal seriously in consultation with Mrs. Joseph. Dr. Mehta is a specialist in tuberculosis. Of course, I know nothing of the arrangements at the Baroda State Hospital, but if Mrs. Joseph is at all prepared to be under Dr. Mehta's care, I would immediately inquire.

With love to both of you,

Yours sincerely,

SJT. GEORGE JOSEPH
CHENGANUR
TRAVANCORE

From a photostat: S.N. 8594; also C.W. 5155

[1] This was from E. R. Menon; *vide* the following item.

225. LETTER TO E. R. MENON

POST ANDHERI,
March 27, 1924

DEAR MR. MENON,

Mr. Andrews has given me your letter for reply. I have forwarded it to Mr. George Joseph.[1] I know nothing of the threatened civil disobedience. It is very difficult for me to give any opinion until I know the actual facts. Generally speaking, it is quite true that I have been averse to civil disobedience being started in the Indian States.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. E. R. MENON
C/o "THE INDIAN SOCIAL REFORMER"
EMPIRE BUILDING, HORNBY ROAD
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 8592; also C.W. 5152

226. LETTER TO P. SIVASAMBA IYER

POST ANDHERI,
March 27, 1924

DEAR MR. SIVASAMBA IYER,

I have your letter of the 14th instant.

I appreciate your difficulty, but I do not know how to advise you or help you. I can only say if you have not received a letter from Deshabhakta Konda Venkatappayya, you should go and see him and explain to him your position. If it is any comfort to you to know, I may mention that the difficulty you find yourself in is not an exceptional case. It is the common lot of many a non-co-operator. And what is equally true is that many co-operators also labour under similar difficulties without the solace which is open to non-co-operators that their difficulty is due to obeying the dictates of their conscience.

Regarding the thieves of your cocoanuts, there are two ways open to you: either you continue to labour on their account and

1 *Vide* the preceding item.

let them steal the fruit till they have had enough. I admit that this is a counsel of perfection. The other is suggested by yourself, namely, you cease to water the tree and let it die unless you can find some way of protecting it by means of a fence or some such contrivance.

Yours truly,

SJT. P. SIVASAMBA IYER
KIL PUDUPAKKAM VILLAGE
CHEYZAR TALUQ
TIRUVETIPURAM POST

From a photostat : S.N. 8595

227. CABLE TO H. S. L. POLAK[1]

POST ANDHERI,
March 27, 1924

KALOPH[2]
LONDON

NOT READY GIVE OPINION COUNCIL ENTRY TILL LEADERS SEEN. IF ARTICLE WANTED NOTWITHSTANDING CAN POST NEXT WEEK. ANDREWS MUST NOT LEAVE.[3]

GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 8596; also C.W. 5159

228. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

POST ANDHERI,
March 27, 1924

MY DEAR HENRY,

I have your cable. In the absence of precise instructions in the cable, I have taken it to mean that the *Spectator* wants my article by post, not by cable. The following was the reply sent to you today:

[1] This was in reply to Polak's cable of March 22 : "London *Spectator* wants from you article of fourteen hundred words giving summarily your present programme. Reply." S.N. 8566

[2] Polak's cable address

[3] Gandhiji also wrote to Polak; *vide* the following item.

Not ready give opinion Council entry till leaders seen. If article wanted notwishstanding can post next week. Andrews must not leave.—Gandhi.

I feel that it is useless to send any article till I can give my views definitely on Council-entry. This I am unable to do till I have conferred with the leaders who are responsible for the change in the Congress programme. They are expected here next week.

I expect to be at the above address till the end of May at the longest, but I may remove to Sabarmati about the middle of May.

With love to you all,

Yours sincerely,

HY. S. L. POLAK, ESQ.
LONDON

From a photostat : S.N. 8597; also C.W. 5156

229. LETTER TO SIR DINSHAW MANECKJEE PETIT

POST ANDHERI,
March 27, 1924

DEAR SIR DINSHAW,

Perhaps you have heard of the late Sorabji[1] of Adajan. As ou know, he was in South Africa for a long time. He was one f the satyagrahis who suffered the longest term of imprisonment. fter he qualified as a barrister, he went to South Africa to do ublic work there. His expenses were paid by a friend. He has left . widow and a daughter. Mr. Pallonjee is a near relative of the orabjee family. The widow and her daughter are at present ving in Bombay for the sake of the daughter's education. The other has to pay a very high rent. She tells me you have some ecent houses for poor Parsees at a very cheap rent. I do not now the terms under which these tenements are let. There was ery little left by Mr. Sorabjee. I think it was under Rs. 1,000. his was all paid to the widow before I went to prison. If you an, consistently with the terms under which the tenements refer-d to are let to poor people, give a lease of one of them to rs. Sorabji, you will confer a personal favour on me. The late orabji was one of the dearest among my comrades. Among

[1] *Vide* Vol. XIV, pp. 507-8.

my many Parsee friends he was one of the most selfless. Mr. Gokhale himself was so much struck by the beauty of his character that he implored him to become a member of his Society, and had he lived and come back to India and had Mr. Gokhale also lived, it is highly likely that he would have joined the Society. I relate this not to influence your decision, because that would have to be arrived at in terms of the conditions guiding the lease of these tenements, but I mention the fact to show why I am interested in everything connected with the deceased. And, could I have persuaded the widow to throw in her lot with me at Sabarmati, I would not have troubled you; but I can well appreciate her desire to give her daughter a training such as is given to the general body of Parsee girls. For this I have no provision in the Ashram where we only turn out spinners and weavers and endeavour to find the inmates as good a surrounding as is humanly possible for the formation of character. The literary training occupies but a subordinate position.

I am,
Yours sincerely,

SIR DINSHAW MANECKJEE PETIT

From a photostat: S.N. 8598; also C.W. 5157

230. LETTER TO R. B. SAPRE

POST ANDHERI,
March 27, 1924

DEAR MR. SAPRE,

I have your letter of the 11th February, for which I thank you.

I did receive the cable referred to by you, for which please accept my thanks for yourself and the other members of the Club. If you could give me some details of the Indian population in Germany, their occupation and the relations between Germans and the Indian residents, I shall be obliged.

Yours sincerely,

R. B. SAPRE, ESQ.
SECRETARY, INDIAN MERCHANTS' CLUB
GLOCKENGIESERWALL 2
HAMBURG (GERMANY)

From a photostat: S.N. 8599; also C.W. 5153

231. *LETTER TO R. N. MANDLIK*

POST ANDHERI,
March 28, 1924

DEAR MR. MANDLIK,

I thank you for sending me a marked copy of *Nava Kal*[1] referred to by you in your letter of the 19th instant.

In my opinion, the context gives a somewhat different meaning to the one put upon the sentences in question by you. I had those sentences and previous ones translated by a friend. The meaning that I gather is that Mr. Khadilkar puts the logical position to which our leaders are driven. You will see that the concluding sentence is interrogative. So far as I am myself concerned, there is no question of my leading a programme of preparations for civil disobedience. Whether the country is in a fit state for starting a campaign of civil disobedience is a question on which I dare not pronounce an opinion when I have hardly studied the condition of the different provinces. But of this I am sure that we shall gain nothing worth having until the country is ready for civil disobedience, and therefore, whether I am well or ill, the course is, in my opinion, quite clear. Enforcement of the Bardoli programme will make the country ready for civil disobedience in the quickest time possible.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. R. N. MANDLIK
EDITOR, THE "LOKAMANYA"
207, RASTIBAI BUILDING,
GIRGAUM, BOMBAY NO. 4

From a photostat: S.N. 8612; also C.W. 5170

[1] Gandhiji had asked for this earlier; *vide* "Letter to R. N. Mandlik", 20-3-1924.

232. LETTER TO A. W. MCMILLAN

POST ANDHERI,
March 28, 1924

DEAR MR. MCMILLAN,

I thank you very much for your letter.

I wish you every success in your efforts in Fiji on behalf of Indian residents there. My message to them is that they must so prepare themselves as to be able to help themselves under every form of difficulty.

I thoroughly endorse your sentiments that you do not want to live in constant antagonism with your own fellow-countrymen in Fiji. I am sure that you cannot serve Indians if you become antagonistic to your own fellow-countrymen. What is needed, I suppose, is a plain statement of truth and insistence upon justice at all cost. Neither can ever necessitate antagonism to anybody.

Yours sincerely,

A. W. MCMILLAN, ESQ.
BENARES CANTT.

From a copy : S.N. 8622

233. LETTER TO K. SRINIVASA IYENGAR[1]

POST ANDHERI,
March 28, 1924

DEAR MR. SRINIVASA IYENGAR,

Mr. Rajagopalachari writes to my son[2] saying that, on his mentioning to you the need of shorthand assistance, you immediately offered to send me your shorthand reporter without any charge whatsoever. I need hardly say how deeply grateful I am to you for the offer. I would have gladly availed myself of it had it not been for Mr. Golikere having, before my son received Mr. Rajagopalachari's letter, offered his services to me as soon as

[1] Son of Kasturi Ranga Iyengar, editor, *The Hindu*

[2] Devdas Gandhi

he came to know that I needed him. He had assisted me just before I went to prison.

Yours sincerely,

K. SRINIVASA IYENGAR, ESQ.
"THE HINDU" OFFICE
MADRAS

From a photostat: S.N. 8615; also C.W. 5169

234. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

POST ANDHERI,
March 28, 1924

MY DEAR RAJAGOPALACHARI,

I have written to Mr. Kasturi Ranga Iyengar's son thanking him for the free offer of the services of a shorthand reporter.

Mahadev had shown me the extract from Maulana Mahomed Ali's speech. It does not make good reading. I expect to see him shortly in any case.

Motilalji and Lalaji are coming tomorrow, and Hakimji the day after. I shall be, therefore, in the thick of the fight, and hope to be free to air my views on Council entry next week. How did you manage to get the recent attack of asthma? Was there no contributory cause? When do you propose to return here? Is it not possible to come here a few days before the Working Committee's meeting?

Yours sincerely,

SJT. C. RAJAGOPALACHARI
SALEM

From a photostat: S.N. 8613; also C.W. 5161

235. LETTER TO A. M. JOSHI

POST ANDHERI,
March 28, 1924

DEAR MR. JOSHI,

You have written[1] to Mrs. Gandhi kindly inviting her to open the Khadi Exhibition to be held in connection with the forthcoming Maharashtra Provincial Conference. Mr. Dastane however told me that he was inviting Mr. C. Rajagopalachari to perform the function. I am positive that it is much better to have him. Mrs. Gandhi can only become a figure-head, and what we need at present is a combination of heart and head in connection with this, the only real constructive movement of a universal character before the people.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. A. M. JOSHI
SECRETARY, EXHIBITION COMMITTEE
MAHARASHTRA PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE
JALGAON, EAST KHANDESH

From a photostat: S.N. 8614; also C.W. 5171

236. LETTER TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR

POST ANDHERI,
March 28, 1924

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter[2], for which I thank you.

Of course, I considered your statement[3] without thinking of your other declarations. I quote the sentences from the very last answer at pages 34 and 35:

> The most vital interests of the country demand the continuance of the organic relations between India and England for many a long year

[1] This was on March 24. S.N. 8575

[2] For Vijayaraghavachariar's reply of March 23 to Gandhiji's letter of March 19, *vide* Appendix X.

[3] This refers to Vijayaraghavachariar's interview, the text of which is not available.

> to come. . . Several politicians maintain that the alternative to the free grant of swaraj by the people of England is the sword. But the preachers of this gospel, whether Indians or Englishmen, forget that the employment of the sword and the establishment of Home Rule within the Empire are wholly inconsistent with, if not entirely antagonistic to, each other. . . Independence outside the British Empire now is fraught with most disastrous results for us and would practically be the enthronement of King Stork in the seat of King Log.
>
> . . . We must not . . . rush into the abyss of total estrangement from England. That way madness lies. For years to come—it may be for centuries or for ever, I do not know, and cannot tell—our destiny is self-rule within the ambit of Great Britain.

I understand what you say about untouchability, and I agree with much of what you say therein. I think I gave you my impression gathered from your statement. Of course, I have not said anything with reference to your remarks on what is gone by. I have purposely refrained because it will serve no useful purpose.

I hope you will soon be better.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR
THE ARAMA
SALEM

From a photostat: S.N. 8616; also C.W. 5166

237. LETTER TO SHIVDASANI

POST ANDHERI,
March 28, 1924

DEAR MR. SHIVDASANI,

I have your interesting letter.[1]

With the views I hold you will not, I trust, expect me to do anything in connection with your scheme. All the energy I have I must devote to the immediate work before me. Your argument about machinery is not at all convincing. There is a tremendous fallacy lying underneath your broad statement: "Machinery

[1] Writing on March 22, Shivdasani had expressed veneration for Gandhiji, but feared he could not follow Gandhiji's logic in his advocacy of hand-woven khadi. Detailing a sugar factory scheme he had formulated, he sought Gandhiji's assistance to raise the necessary capital.

can only supplant machinery." If you will visualize the whole process in detail, you will find that it is totally unnecessary to import machinery in order to supplant machine-made cloth we receive from outside. Do you not see that the whole of the energy and cost of sending cotton say from a village in the centre of India to Manchester, to have it converted into cloth there and re-import it, is saved by the villages themselves converting their own cotton into cloth? It should surely strike you that no machinery in the world can compete with these villagers who need no other machine than their own willing hands and feet, and a few simple wooden instruments which they can devise themselves. I would like you again to consider it from your own standpoint. Multiply the cost of installation in one village by 700,000 and then ask yourself who is to find the capital and to what end? Would you impose all these complications on villagers who are well able, during their leisure hours, to turn their cotton into cloth? I hope not.

Yours sincerely,

MR. SHIVDASANI, L.C.E., BAR-AT-LAW
HIRABAD
HYDERABAD (SIND)

From a photostat: S.N. 8617; also C.W. 5167

238. *LETTER TO JAGDISH CHANDRA BOSE*

POST ANDHERI,
March 28, 1924

DEAR SIR JAGDISH CHANDRA BOSE[1],

I thank you very much for your letter[2] of the 5th instant.

I would be delighted indeed to see you and Lady Bose

[1] 1858-1937; eminent Physicist, Botanist and author; founded Bose Research Institute, Calcutta.

[2] In this Bose had written from London: "It was with great anxiety that we learnt of your serious illness; we are somewhat relieved by the news of your slow recovery. May you live long to serve the cause of righteousness all over the world. We shall return to Bombay about the 16th April and will proceed to Calcutta in 3 or 4 days. I should have liked to have seen you if you were near Bombay at the time. My address will be C/o Mr. Chandavarkar (Son of the late Justice Chandavarkar). With all best wishes." S.N. 8446

on your return if you could find time to motor down to Juhu. It is a pleasant retreat near Andheri.

Yours sincerely,

SIR JAGDISH CHANDRA BOSE
C/o V. N. CHANDAVARKAR, ESQ.
PEDDER RD., CUMBALLA HILL
BOMBAY

From a photostat : S.N. 8619; also C.W. 5162

239. LETTER TO RAMANAND SANYASI

POST ANDHERI,
March 28, 1924

DEAR RAMANAND SANYASI,

I have your letter of the 23rd instant, for which I thank you.

It is difficult for me to give you advice without knowing full particulars:

(1) Has the recruiting started only now and, if it has, from what date?
(2) Was there no recruiting prior to that?
(3) If there was none, when did the stoppage begin?
(4) What inquiry is to be made in the plantations?

The condition cannot now be better than before unless the terms offered by the planters are different. If they are different, you should be able to get a copy of those terms in the villages where recruiting is going on. I therefore do not know what purpose can be served just now by going to the tea plantations and making inquiries. Moreover, the Provincial Congress Committee in Assam should be corresponded with before any steps are taken. I would therefore suggest your writing a letter[1] giving full particulars of the recruiting going on in the districts mentioned by you. If you adopt my suggestion, when sending your reply, please send me a copy of your letter to the Assam Committee also.

Yours sincerely,

RAMANAND SANYASI
BALDEV ASHRAM
KHURJA, U.P.

From a photostat : S.N. 8620; also C.W. 5172

[1] Ramanand Sanyasi wrote again on April 1, furnishing the particulars asked for by Gandhiji and enclosing a copy of his letter to the Assam Congress Committee. *Vide* Appendix XI.

240. LETTER TO P. K. NAIDU

POST ANDHERI,
March 28, 1924

MY DEAR NAIDU[1],

I was delighted to see your writing after such a long time.

I am watching the course of events in South Africa with the greatest attention and anxiety. If any one person can possibly influence the course of events in our favour, it is certainly Mrs. Naidu[2]. She has a wonderful charm of manner and is tireless in her duty. She is staying up to the end of this month and probably longer still. I only hope that if, in spite of all the efforts, the Class Areas Bill does become law, you will be able to persuade our people to get up satyagraha if it becomes necessary. At the same time, I would say, do not launch it unless you are absolutely certain that you will be able to carry the thing through. Do please keep me posted with all the particulars, sending me cuttings.

Yours sincerely,

P. K. NAIDU, ESQ.
P. O. Box No. 6522
JOHANNESBURG

From a copy: S.N. 8623; also C.W. 5164

241. LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

POST ANDHERI,
March 28, 1924

MY DEAR JAIRAMDAS,

I have your telegram which I shall bear in mind. In no case would I have made any specific mention of Sindh if I could not have shown the statement previously to you. Of course it is not yet ready. I shall therefore not be able to send you a copy before publication. Therefore there will be no reference to Sindh in it.

[1] A passive resister and associate of Gandhiji in South Africa

[2] Sarojini Naidu

I am looking forward to receipt of your letter which I hope will contain full information, as also good news about Dr. Choithram's health.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM
HYDERABAD (SINDH)

From a photostat: S.N. 8621; also C.W. 5163

242. LETTER TO D. R. MAJLI

POST ANDHERI,
March 28, 1924

MY DEAR MAJLI,

I was extremely delighted to receive your postcard. I am glad you are now comparatively at peace with yourself. The fever was probably a good outlet. By careful nursing you will soon get rid of your fever. I am certainly going to make use of the information you give me regarding your treatment. I like your thought: "I am not worth anything." How nice it would be if everyone of us would think so? Then nobody would want to be leader, but all would be servants and fellow-workers. It would be the nicest thing to achieve and run swaraj if everyone sincerely felt that he was nothing and that the cause was everything. I propose to use this letter of yours for the first issue of *Young India*[1] under my editorship, which I resume next week.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. D. R. MAJLI
BELGAUM

From a copy: S.N. 8610; also C.W. 5160

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 3-4-1924.

243. LETTER TO A. CHRISTOPHER

POST ANDHERI,
March 28, 1924

MY DEAR CHRISTOPHER[1],

I was so glad to see your familiar writing after so many years.

I am anxiously and closely watching the events in South Africa and will do all that is possible for an ailing man to do. I know that the presence of Mrs. Naidu is a source of great joy and strength to you. Do please keep me well informed of the progress of events, sending me all the cuttings and other documents that you may think I should see. You have asked me to send a cablegram about unity amongst our people. I think it will serve no useful purpose. Your letter is dated 11th February. It is now 28th of March. All that I infer from the cablegrams being received about Mrs. Naidu's progress in South Africa goes to show that you are presenting a united front. Why should I therefore assume disunion when everything points to the contrary?

I received a cablegram from Pather.[2] You will have seen that I have made full use of that cable also. In view of my long message to Mrs. Naidu[3] which I cabled in reply to your cable, I have not sent any further cables.

I am making fair progress. Mr. Andrews is with me and looking after me and helping me.

With regards to you all from Mr. Andrews and myself.

Yours sincerely,

A. CHRISTOPHER, ESQ.
156, VICTORIA STREET
DURBAN

From a microfilm : S.N. 8624; also C.W. 5165

[1] Gandhiji's co-worker who actively participated in the Great March of 1913.

[2] *Vide* "Statement to Press", 23-3-1924.

[3] *Vide* "Cable to Sarojini Naidu", before 16-3-1924.

244. LETTER TO MAHADEO PANDAY AND CARAMAT ALLI MACDOOM

POST ANDHERI,
March 28, 1924

DEAR FRIENDS,

I have your letter of the 25th inst.

As my difficulty is fundamental, I fear I can do nothing to help you. You state that the Negroes are clamouring for the conditions offered to our Indian colonists. Personally I do not mind it, nor need our countrymen in British Guiana fear the proposed influx of the Negroes. If the 1,30,000 Indians give a good account of themselves, they will bless themselves and bless the Negroes and everyone else who goes there. Surely out of that population you should be able to raise enough doctors, Pundits, Maulvis and all other professionals. I cannot help observing, too, that even at the present moment there is nothing to prevent a single Indian from freely emigrating to British Guiana if he chose to. What I dread and what I do not want in the present helpless condition of India is a stimulated or assisted emigration. You may know that hundreds of free Indians go to the Straits, Mauritius, Madagascar, Zanzibar and several other parts of the world without let or hindrance. What baffles me is this feverish agitation and great waste of money in connection with a scheme of colonization. If you do not mind my telling you that, on that very account, apart from the fundamental difficulty, I thoroughly distrust it.

Yours sincerely,

MESSRS MAHADEO PANDAY AND CARAMAT ALLI MACDOOM
MAIDEN'S HOTEL
[DELHI]

From a copy : S.N. 8625; also C.W. 5168

245. LETTER TO A. G. ADVANI

POST ANDHERI,
March 29, 1924

DEAR MR. ADVANI[1],

I have your letter.[2]

I knew nothing of what you referred to, but I am immediately doing all I can to ascertain the truth. I would like you to send me all the proof you have in support of your statement. I take it that you do not want me to regard your letter as confidential, because I must use it if I am to know the truth. I do not wish to publish it in the Press without it being absolutely necessary, and certainly not before I hear from you.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. A. G. ADVANI
S. J. CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY
ELPHINSTONE STREET
CAMP KARACHI

From a photostat: S.N. 8626

246. LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

POST ANDHERI,
March 29, 1924

MY DEAR JAIRAMDAS,

Here is a copy of a letter[3] received by me, which speaks for itself. Please let me know what truth there is in the charges, and if you do not know anything, please inquire and advise me as to what should be done.

Yours sincerely,

Encl.
SJT. JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM
HYDERABAD (SINDH)

From a photostat : S.N. 8627

[1] Sindhi leader who suffered imprisonment in the national cause

[2] Dated March 24, this drew Gandhiji's attention to the non-publication of the report of the Karachi Congress Committee for the period July 1921 to March 1922 with a view to covering up an alleged misappropriation of funds. Advani had asked for an inquiry into the matter.

[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

247. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

Saturday [*March 29, 1924*][1]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

It was good that you gave up the idea of going to Kanpur. Is there any complaint still, besides weakness?

You know about the institution[2] at Chinchwad. It is facing a good deal of opposition and is always short of funds. I think it is necessary to help the workers. I am considering how this can be done. In all, they need Rs. 15,000. If they get this help, they will want no more and they are prepared to take a vow that they will not ask for more. If you feel with me that they deserve this help and if you are in a position to give it, then I should like you to do so.

Rajagopalachari is again suffering from asthma. I think the climate of Nasik would suit him. If you can accommodate him, write to him at his Salem address and ask him to stay with you for some time. He is already under the treatment of the Poona *vaidya*, and the latter will be able to examine him. I have indeed written to him suggesting that it would be better if he went to stay at Nasik while you are there.

You must have learnt that the Poona *vaidya* has started treatment of Vallabhbhai's Manibehn, Maganlal's Radha and Prof. Kripalani's [sister] Kikibehn. This was done at the suggestion of Devdas.

Let me know what your experience of this *vaidya* is.

Malaviyaji left for Kashi yesterday. We had some discussion about the Hindu-Muslim problem. Hakimji had also been here. With him also I discussed the same subject. Motilalji who has been here will stay on. He has been discussing the issue of Council-entry.

I have been thinking about all these things.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand : G.N. 2845

[1] The discussions with Madan Mohan Malaviya, Hakim Ajmal Khan and Motilal Nehru referred to in the letter took place during the last week of March 1924 at Juhu. The last Saturday of the month fell on March 29.

[2] Svavalamban Pathshala, a national school then run by Shri Kanitkar at Chinchwad, a village near Poona

248. *LETTER TO K. T. PAUL*[1]

[On or after *March 29, 1924*][2]

Do come on Tuesday. If, in the midst of other friends, I can spare the time, I shall do so. Otherwise you should come again on Thursday. You should take your meal here.[3]

From a photostat: S. N. 8628

249. *SPEECH AT JUHU*[4]

[Before *March 30, 1924*]

How can you account for cases of pneumonia and other diseases in this beautiful spot where there is no shortage of houses, where light and air are unlimited and where you seek escape from the squalor and congestion of Bombay? I simply cannot understand this. Rather than that I, an invalid myself, should reproach you for this, I think I should try to explain to you that it is we ourselves who are responsible for these conditions. I look upon mosquitoes, fleas, flies and other agents which spread disease, as correctives provided for us by Nature. Were it not for them, would we ever wake up? Living here, I can add to the filth to any extent I choose to. I can also generate any number of flies, fleas and mosquitoes. But, as you see, I do nothing of the kind. On the day I

[1] K. T. Paul, a friend of C. F. Andrews, was connected with the Federation of National Youth Associations at Calcutta. In a letter of February 11, he had wished to meet Gandhiji for "a quiet and unhurried conference". Gandhiji appears to have written to Paul on March 1 saying that he had forestalled him in regard to a method of dealing with the intercommunal problem. This letter, however, is not available.

[2] On March 23, Paul wrote back, stating at length his faith in Christ's rich, human personality. In his letter dated March 29 to Devdas Gandhi, on the back of which this reply was scribbled, Paul had expressed a desire to see Gandhiji on April 1.

[3] The letter has, in the end, the following note in Gandhiji's hand : "Dr. Kitchlew can take and have the letter delivered."

[4] This speech, reported by Mahadev Desai in *Navajivan*, 31-3-1924, was made before a small gathering of teachers, members of the Managing Committee and guardians of the pupils of the National School at Vile Parle, near Juhu. Orthodox guardians did not like the teachers' idea of admitting children of Harijans.

arrived I said that we required no sweeper. True, there is a sweeper here now, but half of the refuse is removed by the children, Devdas, Pyarelal and Krishnadas. If you see anything left undone, it is due to some negligence on the part of these children. If, however, I allow dirt to accumulate, you can easily see that all the pleasure of natural scenery will be lost. You should also understand the close connection between sweeping out dirt and swaraj. Imagine that we have already won swaraj. If, now, we still remain careless and indifferent to the rules of hygiene, there is little doubt that the British will again kick us out of power. The question of *Dheds* and *Bhangis* is intimately connected with this matter. If we continue to harass them and regard them as untouchables, with what face can we demand equality with the British? It is necessary that we understand this before talking of equality.

THE SHASTRAS

What shall I say about the attitude of religion in this matter? In my opinion, not everything in our religious books or all the various unrelated sayings of Yajnyavalkya[1] and other sages can be regarded as eternal verities. Conditions are different now from what they were in those days. If they were the same, since we look upon Draupadi[2] as a superhuman being, take her name every morning and regard the five Pandavas with reverence, would we not regard as a saint any woman who took to herself five husbands? It is for their deeds that we revere the Pandavas and Draupadi. We should appreciate others' virtues and be eager to acquire them. It is, then, because of their extraordinary qualities that we cherish their memory. This about the *Mahabharata*. There is no work I love more than the *Ramayana*. Yet, do I for that reason accept everything which Tulsidas attributes to Shastras in his work[3]? The *Manusmriti* is an authoritative book. It is categorical in permitting flesh-eating. Will you, therefore, eat meat? When I say these things to you, you are taken aback. If any people eat meat on the sly, that is another matter, but according to the *Manusmriti*, eating meat is nothing to be ashamed of; it may be done openly. And yet we regard meat-eating as forbidden. What is prohibited in *kaliyuga*[4] was freely permitted in *satyayuga*[5]. Does it not seem strange that, during that golden age, meat-eating should have

[1] Vedic sage, reputed author of a *Smriti* (code of laws)
[2] Wife of the five Pandava princes, in the *Mahabharata*
[3] *Ramacharitmanas* or the *Ramayana*
[4] Age of strife
[5] Age of truth

been permitted, but not in this Age of Kali? But the truth is that much depends on the way we look at religion. And here there are two points to be kept in mind. The first is that matters of religion should be decided not by the intellect but by the heart, and the second that we should not follow, in the name of dharma, the opposite of dharma. You should know that the *Gita* can be interpreted so as to justify crimes. Bhima[1] used his club against Duryodhana[2]. If someone says that cousins are, therefore, free to regard each other as enemies and kill each other, I would say that such a person does not know how to read the *Gita* aright. This whole matter falls within the province of the heart. My religion does not trust reason; it trusts only the heart. I, therefore, pray that you look into your hearts.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 30-3-1924

250. *MESSAGE TO "BHARATI"*

[End of *March 1924*][3]

The only message that I have for men and women of India, but more especially for the latter, is that of the spinning-wheel. The non-violent movement is one to enable the weakest of human beings to vindicate their dignity without an earthly protector. Woman has been regarded as weakness personified. She may be weak in body, but she can be as strong in soul as the strongest. The spinning-wheel, with all its implications, is the weapon, in India at least, of the strong in soul. The universal adoption of that wonderful wheel robs Great Britain of her purely selfish interest in India. It is only then possible for the connection between India and England to become pure and predominantly unselfish, and therefore, for the good of the world. May the women of India adopt hand-spinning as a part of their daily duty, and take their full share in the struggle for the freedom of the weakest in body of our country.

From a photostat : S.N. 8618

[1] The second and the strongest of the Pandava brothers

[2] The eldest of the Kaurava princes, in the *Mahabharata*

[3] The exact date of this message which Gandhiji sent to Saraladevi Choudhrani is not ascertainable. She proposed to start a journal at Lahore in the third week of March 1924. The photostat source is also located among S.N. records and papers relating to that month.

251. *LETTER TO K. P. KESAVA MENON*

ANDHERI,
April 1 [1924]

MY DEAR KESHAV MENON,

Messrs Shivram Iyer and Vancheswara Iyer have come here in connection with your satyagraha[1]. They tell me that the roads in dispute are private property belonging to the temple to which they lead and that it is in exclusive possession of Brahmin trustees who, these gentlemen claim, have perfect right to regulate entry. I then asked them if these roads were private property, exclusively belonging to the Brahmins, whether any non-Brahmins had the use of them, and they admitted that they had. I then told them that, so long as a single non-Brahmin was allowed the use of the roads, the so-called untouchables and unapproachables must have the same right as other non-Brahmins. They agree, but they say that it will take some time before they can bring round to their view of thinking the trustees and other Brahmins who are interested in temple and roads.

I understand, too, that Malaviyaji is going to the South in two months' time. If the trustees of the temple agree, in the event of any dispute between you as representing untouchables and unapproachables and themselves, to refer all such disputes to the sole arbitration of Malaviyaji, his award to be delivered within a fixed time, I would advise you to suspend satyagraha, publicly announcing the cause of suspension, namely, its reference to arbitration.

Naturally, this advice is tendered in the belief that the main facts stated by the Iyer brothers are correct. They tell me that they are as anxious as we are to carry out this reform in its thoroughness and, if they are sincere in their professions, we should reciprocate and accommodate them in so far as it is consistent with our principles.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm of a newspaper cutting : S.N. 10273; also *The Hindu*, 4-3-1924

[1] Vykom Satyagraha for access to temple and public roads to Harijans; *vide* "Letter to K. P. Kesava Menon", 19-3-1924.

252. TELEGRAM TO AGRAWAL CONFERENCE, KANPUR[1]

[On or after *April 1, 1924*]

AGRAWAL CONFERENCE
CAWNPORE

WISH CONFERENCE SUCCESS. HOPE CONFERENCE WILL HELP KHADDAR WHICH ALONE CAN REMOVE STARVATION MILLIONS COUNTRYMEN AND HINDI PRACHAR SOUTHERN INDIA WHICH AGRAWALS HAVE HITHERTO SO GENEROUSLY SUPPORTED. SETH JAMNALALJI TOO WEAK TO UNDERGO FATIGUE.

GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 8642

253. TELEGRAM TO K. P. KESAVA MENON

[On or after *April 1, 1924*][2]

MY CONGRATULATIONS SATYAGRAHIS. HOPE STREAM WILL CONTINUE TILL SUCCESS ACHIEVED. WE HAVE TO CONQUER OPPONENTS BY PERFECT LOVE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 10265

[1] This was in reply to a telegraphic communication received by Gandhiji : 'All India Marwari Agrawal Conference on 5th, 6th, 7th April. Seth Anandilalji Podar Bombay president-elect reaching here 4th. Seth Jamnalalji also expected. Your blessings and spiritual message earnestly solicited. Swagath". S.N. 8641

Jamnalal Bajaj had also sent on April 1 a telegram to Devdas Gandhi, which read : "Cawnpore Agrawal Conference forcing attendance. Please request Poona *vaidya* to personally advise. Must start third if allowed. Bapu's advice also solicited." S.N. 8642

[2] This was in reply to a telegram from K. P. Kesava Menon received on April 1, 1924, which read: "Vaikom satyagraha started yesterday. Three volunteers peacefully entering prohibited area were arrested. Their dignified behaviour greatly impressed public. Conduct of police praiseworthy. Another batch three proceeded today also arrested. Orderly crowds witnessing satyagraha every day. First batch sentenced six months." S.N. 10265

254. *FOR THE READERS PAST AND PRESENT OF "YOUNG INDIA"*[1]

It is not without much hesitation that I resume the editorship of *Young India*. I do not know whether my health can yet sustain the energy required for conducting the paper. But I cannot foresee. I can only dimly understand God's purpose in bringing me out of my retirement in Yeravda. In taking up the editorial control of *Navajivan* and *Young India* I am following the Light as far as I see it.

Nor have I any new message to deliver to the reader. I had hoped for release by an act of a Swaraj Parliament and to be able to take my humble share in serving Free India. That was not to be.

We have yet to attain freedom. I have no new programme. My faith in the old is just as bright as ever, if not brighter. Indeed, one's faith in one's plans and methods is truly tested when the horizon before one is the blackest.

Though, therefore, so far as my mind can perceive, there will be no new method or policy developed in the pages of *Young India*, I hope they will not be stale. *Young India* will be stale when Truth becomes stale. I want to see God face to face. God I *know* is Truth. For me the only certain means of knowing God is non-violence—ahimsa—love. I live for India's freedom and would die for it, because it is part of Truth. Only a free India can worship the true God. I work for India's freedom because my swadeshi teaches me that, being born in it and having inherited her culture, I am fittest to serve *her* and *she* has a prior claim to my service. But my patriotism is not exclusive; it is calculated not only not to hurt any other nation, but to benefit all in the true sense of the word. India's freedom as conceived by me can never be a menace to the world.

But if it is not to be such a menace, the means adopted for gaining it must be strictly non-violent. My interest in India's freedom will cease if she adopts violent means, for their fruit will be

[1] On April 2, 1924, about the same time as this article, Gandhiji prepared, at Juhu, Bombay, the preface to the "History of the Satyagraha in South Africa", which he had commenced writing in Gujarati on November 26, 1923 and thirty chapters of which he had completed in Yeravda Jail. The preface, not reproduced here in its chronological order, is given along with the text in Volume XXIX.

not freedom but slavery in disguise. And if we have not yet attained our freedom, it is because we have not been non-violent in thought, word and deed. It is true that non-violence has been adopted as a policy, i.e., because we are convinced that by no other means can *India* achieve her freedom. Our policy is not, must not be, a camouflage. We may not harbour violence under cover of non-violence. Whilst we claim to be non-violent for a particular purpose and a particular period, our thought and word must accord with our practice for that purpose and that period. Even so does an honest jailer act towards a condemned man. He protects his life at the peril of his own till the date of the extreme penalty. He thinks and speaks of his safety. He is, for the time and the person, non-violent in thought, word and deed.

We pledged ourselves to be non-violent towards each other and our opponents, whether administrators or co-operators. We were to appeal to their hearts and evoke the best in them, not play upon their fear to gain our end. Consciously or unconsciously the majority of us—the articulate portion—have not been true to our pledge. We have been intolerant towards our opponents. Our own countrymen are filled with distrust of us. They simply do not believe in our non-violence. Hindus and Mussalmans in many places have provided an object lesson, not in non-violence, but in violence. Even the 'changers' and the 'no-changers' have flung mud against one another. Each has claimed the monopoly of truth and, with an ignorant certainty of conviction, sworn at the other for his helpless stupidity.

The pages of *Young India* can only, therefore, illustrate the utility and the necessity of non-violence in dealing with the questions that engage public attention. So much for the central policy of *Young India*.

A word as to the business side. Some of the readers will recollect that I announced that, when at the instance of Mr. Shankerlal Banker and other friends, I took up the editing of *Young India*, I told the public that it was run at a loss and that I would be obliged to give it up if the loss continued. I do not believe in publishing newspapers indefinitely at a loss or by means of advertisements. If a paper supplies a felt want, it must pay its way. The subscription list, however, ran up steadily week by week and it began to yield profits. But, during the last two years, as the reader is aware, the list has fallen from 21,500 to 3,000 and it is now being run at a loss. Happily, *Navajivan* has made up for it. But even that method is wrong. *Young India* must stand on its own bottom or fall. It is likely that, if I still retain the personal affection of

the old readers, *Young India* will soon pay its way. But I have mentioned the loss not only to acquaint the public with the true state of affairs, but also as an introduction to an important announcement.

When Messrs Banker and Yagnik suggested that the Gujarati *Navajivan*, which was then a monthly, should be turned into a weekly and edited by me and when I undertook the responsibility, I announced that it would be given up if it proved a loss and that if there were profits, they would be utilized for some public purpose.[1] *Navajivan* soon became profitable, but at the instance of Sheth Jamnalalji, *Hindi Navajivan* was commenced.[2] It too had just begun to pay its way when my arrest took place and the circulation steadily fell. It is now again being issued at a loss. But, in spite of these losses, the large circulation of *Navajivan* and other publications enables the management to devote Rs. 50,000 to public work. Swami Anandanand who is managing the *Navajivan* press has left it entirely to me to allocate the money and, as I know no other and better method of utilizing it, I propose to devote the sum through the agency of the Provincial Congress Committee to the spread of the spinning-wheel and khadi in Gujarat, including Kathiawar. Preference will be given to their spread among poor women and the suppressed classes. It is due to my co-workers that I should inform the public that with some of them the work is a labour of love. Where they receive payment, it is just enough for their wants. The result of such work is before the public, I know that, if from the sweeper upward I could secure selfless workers, with the efficient management I have the good fortune to have today, it would be possible to show a better surplus.

I should also like to add that, if *Young India* again shows profits, as it did before my imprisonment, they will be distributed for all-India work. If any profits are derived from *Hindi Navajivan*, they will be devoted to the spread of Hindi.

M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 3-4-1924

[1] *Vide* Vol. XVII, pp. 346-7.
[2] On August 19, 1921

255. *NOTES*

Thanks

It would be ungrateful for me if I did not publicly tender my thanks to the editors who one after another took charge of *Young India* at a most critical period in its career. Shuaib Qureshi, with his sledge-hammer style, proved too strong for the Government and they hardly allowed him breathing time. Then followed Rajagopalachari with his scholarly contributions, exhibiting a wonderful grasp of the deep truths of satyagraha. George Joseph's trenchant style is still fresh to the reader. To all these friends my deepest thanks are due for coming to the rescue. The management staff was no less industrious in its zeal for the national cause.

The Khilafat

I have been asked to give my opinion on the Khilafat trouble. I have none to give. It were impertinence for me, an outsider, to thrust my views on my Muslim brethren. It is a question which the Mussalmans must settle for themselves. All that non-Muslims can do is to assure them of their deep sympathy in their affliction. The existence of the Khilafat is an essential part of their faith. Everyone who holds his own religion to be dear to himself is bound to express genuine sympathy with those of a different faith. The heart of every Hindu who values Muslim friendship must go out to the Mussalmans in their great sorrow. They have a more anxious time now than when the Khilafat was attacked from without. But now that the danger comes from within and several sections are contending for their own views, it must tax the utmost resources of those who are engaged in solving the problem in a manner that is consistent with the deep truths of their own faith and acceptable to all sections. This much is quite clear to me that the future of the Khilafat, indeed of Islam itself in so far as it can rest with man, lies in the hands of Indian Mussalmans. Theirs is the burden, theirs the privilege. May God grant them the power to see the right path and the strength to follow it.

'Commercializing Vice'

This is the expression that Mr. Andrews has used in connection with opium traffic on which the reader will find in another place an informing contribution from his pen.[1] As he handed it to

[1] This was published in *Young India*, 3-4-1924.

me, he said he had improved upon my description of the traffic. I have described it as 'organizing vice'. Mr. Andrews calls it 'commercializing vice'. I dare not dispute with a scholar of Mr. Andrews' stamp the superiority for choice phrase-making. But I would commend to the reader's careful attention Mr. Andrews' essay. And when he has digested the gruesome facts with which Mr. Andrews has fortified his impeachment of the opium traffic, let the reader recall the fact that it is British India that grows and supplies opium to British Singapore, and then recall the further fact that our children are educated in Government schools from the proceeds of this organized and commercialized vice.

Spare Hours

Mr. C. Rajagopalachari's appeal[1] to the students printed elsewhere deserves the careful attention of all students not merely of national schools but also of Government schools. Scholastic non-co-operation like every other had a touch of violence about it. Hence the gulf between the boys and girls belonging to national and Government schools. As a matter of fact, there should be no such gulf. Mr. Rajagopalachari's suggestion, if adopted, will serve a double purpose. The adoption will bridge the gulf and provide a means beneficial to the nation of utilizing the spare hours that students get during vacations. The advance must be made by non-co-operation students. They will not only thereby not surrender an iota of their principle but they will actually emphasize its non-violent and, therefore, vital part. There need be no despair if the advance is rejected. The suitor may feel sure of success, if it is fellowship that prompts the advance.

An Example to Copy

The boys of the National School at Dharwar have sent me a parcel of yarn spun by them and written to me that it was spun continuously for seven days and nights. I learnt in the Sassoon Hospital that the boys of the Chinchwad institution kept several wheels going continuously for a month and a half. If all who can spin were to follow the example of these good boys, we should solve the khadi problem in no time, and as I believe in the capacity of the spinning-wheel, if it was universally adopted, to give us swaraj, I have no doubt that the devotion of the boys of the Dharwar National School and the boys of the Chinchwad institution will take us many a step in the direction of swaraj. And as such

[1] In his article "Vacation Thoughts", he had suggested to the students that they utilize their leisure for khadi work.

spinning can only be a labour of love, it enables us either to reduce the price of khadi or to give better wages to those who spin for their livelihood or for supplementing it.

MR. MAJLI AND THE JAIL TREATMENT

As a fellow-patient, I wrote a brief note[1] to Mr. Majli of Belgaum by way of consolation. Mr. Majli, as the reader is aware, was discharged from prison because he was ailing rather seriously. In reply to my note, he writes :

> Your letter in your own hand-writing could not but make me feel at first highly pleased, but soon after highly obliged. Yesterday I had as usual high fever lasting for full sixteen hours—I am getting fever every alternate day—but your advice remained stamped on my brain throughout and I succeeded at last in observing silence throughout the period of fever. I am now perfectly at peace in mind, but my body is again showing signs of diminishing vitality as a result of the new development of this fever of alternate days.
>
> I read in the papers an interpellation and a reply thereto regarding the treatment I received. Out of the three facts stated, two are misstatements. I was not given spinning as stated on behalf of Government, but twisting yarn (1 lb. a day). Secondly, I was kept in utter seclusion under lock for all the 24 hours of the day except 15 minutes' walking. Though Government says I was ill when I was [sent] to jail, I was refused even the rice diet, but given the *jowari* bread which I could not digest. I leave it to you to give publicity or not, because I am not worth anything.

Mr. Majli is a great worker. The readers will share the hope with me that he may be soon free of all ailments and find himself in harness. Regarding the contradiction, the uninitiated reader may not be able to notice much distinction between twisting of yarn and spinning, as a mere piece of work. The distinction for Mr. Majli was vital. Thousands of Indians today regard spinning as a sacred duty and, therefore, a pleasure, whereas twisting has no such value for them. Whilst, therefore, in his weak state Mr. Majli would regard twisting as an insufferable task, he would regard spinning as balm for his afflicted soul and a diversion to take the thoughts of his ailment away from him. Moreover, whilst a practised worker can twist one pound of yarn without much difficulty, an ailing person like Mr. Majli can hardly twist a quarter of a pound. Let the reader understand that I know what twisting yarn means, and as I like physical work, I assure him that I do not

[1] *Vide* "Letter to D. R. Majli", 23-3-1924.

exaggerate when I say that Mr. Majli can hardly twist a quarter of a pound a day without undue strain on his frail body. The seclusion under lock for 24 hours of the day, with 15 minutes' walk in the open, was a torture and if Mr. Majli was given *jowari* bread and refused the rice diet, it was the surest method of making him worse. I do not, however, print the foregoing letter by way of complaint against the Jail authorities, because very often these things happen without any deliberate intention of inflicting hardship on prisoners. What is at fault is the whole system of Jail administration which I have already described as soul-less, and much worse is an attempt made by the Government to deny or twist facts. Mr. Majli has apologized for sending the contradiction. There was no occasion for it. He is, after all, a prominent worker in Karnatak. How nice, however, it would be if everyone of us could sincerely say to himself: "I am not worth anything"! Then we would all be fellow-servants and fellow-workers among whom the only competition would be to do the maximum of work without the slightest desire for gaining prominence or publicity. Swaraj could then be won and run without any difficulty. Innumerable difficulties arise when everyone wants to lead and advise and nobody wants to work.

Young India, 3-4-1924

256. *MY MISSION*

Pundit Ghasita Ram, "President, All-India Sub-Assistant Surgeons Association, Punjab Province, Amritsar", sent to the Editor some days ago an "open letter" addressed to me. After omitting from it laudatory phrases and sentences of good wishes and after correcting obvious grammatical errors, the letter reads:

> I am a Brahman, a doctor and an old man like you. It will not be out of courtesy if I in this triple capacity offer you a piece of counsel. If you see wisdom and truth in it and if it appeals to your common sense and sentiments, kindly take it to heart.
>
> You have seen much of the world; you have read much of it. Consequently you possess a wonderful experience of it, but in this world of mortals none till now has been able to accomplish the task he has undertaken in his lifetime. Buddha in spite of his high morality could not convert the whole of India to Buddhism.
>
> Shankaracharya in spite of his high intellectuality could not make all India Vedantist. Christ in spite of his high spirituality could not bring into the fold of Christianity the whole Jewish nation. I do not think, and

I am not prepared to believe for a single moment about the accomplishment of your task. Still in face of these historical facts, if you believe in its accomplishment in your lifetime, then Sir, I venture to say that it is nothing but a dream.

This world is a place of trials, troubles and turmoils. The more a man sinks into it the more he is restless and, eventually, he loses his spiritual calmness and peace of mind. Consequently, the Mahatmas of olden time kept themselves aloof from worldly worries, anxieties and cares and strove to gain perfect peace and true quality of mind and enjoyed an everlasting happiness and bliss thereby.

The Jail life has brought a great change in your life and vigour and the disease has reduced you much. Therefore, in the fitness of things, you may live a calm life and spin the thread of your remaining days in a certain solitary cave in the meditation of God, and in realization of your own self in perfect spiritual tranquillity and calmness, because your health will not allow you to bear the burden of the worldly cares any more. It shall not be out of place to mention that you are absolutely convinced of the goodwill, mercy and sympathy of good officers. That very system of European medicines and surgery, which you condemned more than once, has saved you from the jaws of monstrous death. The English officers helped you in time of your troubles and needs.

"A friend in need is a friend indeed." Now it remains for you to show your true friendship and to become the true ally of the British Raj in gratitude for the safety of your life and your release from the jail. If anyhow you cannot do so by your words and deeds, then pray do not come into the arena of political activity, but still if your restless soul does not allow you to sit in rest, then in this *Bhumi*, the motherland of great sages and saints, *Rishis* and *Munis*, take up the task of spiritualizing your brother Indians, teach them a lesson of true realization of the self. By doing so, instead of gaining this Kingdom of Earth, you will gain the Kingdom of Heaven.

In my opinion, the writer is desperately in earnest and merits an answer on that account if for nothing else. But it enables me, too, to clear up certain misapprehensions about my mission in life.

Let me first, however, dispose of the advice about my views on medicine. I have not *Indian Home Rule*[1] before me, but I recollect sufficient to be able to say that I have nothing to revise about the views set forth there. If I had written it for English readers and in English, I would have put the same thought in a manner that would have been more acceptable to the English ear. The original is in Gujarati and was written for the Gujarati readers

[1] This was a translation of *Hind Swaraj*; *vide* Vol. X, pp. 6-68.

of *Indian Opinion* of Natal. Moreover, what is written there has reference to an ideal state. It is a common error to think that condemnation of measures involves that of men. Medicine does often benumb the soul of the patient. It may, therefore, be considered evil, but not, therefore, necessarily medicine-men. I had precious medical friends when I wrote the book and did not hesitate to seek their advice in times of need. That was, as the writer implies, inconsistent with my belief regarding the use of medicine. Several friends have said to me the same thing in so many words. I plead guilty. But that is to admit that I am not a perfect man. Unfortunately for me, I am far from being perfect. I am an humble aspirant for perfection. I know my way to it also. But knowing the way is not reaching its end. If I was perfect, if I had acquired full control over all my passions even in thought, I should be perfect in body. I am free to confess that daily I am obliged to expend a great amount of mental energy in acquiring control over my thoughts. When I have succeeded, if I ever do, think what a storehouse of energy would be set free for service. As I hold that appendicitis was a result of infirmity of thought or mind, so do I concede that my submission to the surgical operation was an additional infirmity of mind. If I was absolutely free of egoism, I would have resigned myself to the inevitable; but I wanted to live in the present body. Complete detachment is not a mechanical process. One has to grow to it by patient toil and prayer. As for gratitude, I have more than once publicly expressed my gratitude to Col. Maddock and his staff for the kindness with which they overwhelmed me. But there is no connection between the kind treatment I received from Col. Maddock and the system of Government I condemn. Col. Maddock himself would think little of me, if I revised my views about Dyerism because he, Col. Maddock, was a competent surgeon and did his duty as such. Nor have I any cause to be thankful to the Government for providing me with best surgical assistance or for prematurely releasing me. The former they were bound to provide for every prisoner. The latter has embarrassed me. I knew my course in prison whether well or ill. Outside the prison-walls, although I am slowly regaining my health, I do not know with certainty how to shape my course.

Now for the central point of the letter. The confusion in the writer's mind has arisen because of his misconception of the work of the prophets he names and of an awkward (for me) comparison between them and me. I do not know that Buddha did not accomplish his task which was to reach *Nirvana*. Tradition has it

that he did. Conversion of others was a by-product, if one may so describe a sacred function. The Gospels record it of Jesus that he testified on the Cross of his own work, 'It is finished.'[1] Nor has their work of love died after them. The truest part of it will live for ever. The two or three thousand years that have gone by since their ministry are but a speck in the vast time circle.

I do not consider myself worthy to be mentioned in the same breath with the race of prophets. I am an humble seeker after truth. I am impatient to realize myself, to attain *moksha* in this very existence. My national service is part of my training for freeing my soul from the bondage of flesh. Thus considered, my service may be regarded as purely selfish. I have no desire for the perishable kingdom of earth. I am striving for the Kingdom of Heaven which is *moksha*. To attain my end it is not necessary for me to seek the shelter of a cave. I carry one about me, if I would but know it. A cave-dweller can build castles in the air, whereas a dweller in a palace like Janak has no castles to build. The cave-dweller who hovers round the world on the wings of thought has no peace. A Janak, though living in the midst of 'pomp and circumstance', may have peace that passeth understanding. For me the road to salvation lies through incessant toil in the service of my country and therethrough of humanity. I want to identify myself with everything that lives. In the language of the *Gita* I want to live at peace with both friend and foe. Though, therefore, a Mussalman or a Christian or a Hindu may despise me and hate me, I want to love him and serve him even as I would love my wife or son though they hate me. So my patriotism is for me a stage in my journey to the land of eternal freedom and peace. Thus it will be seen that for me there are no politics devoid of religion. They subserve religion. Politics bereft of religion are a death-trap because they kill the soul.

Young India, 3-4-1924

[1] *John*, 19-30

257. PLEA FOR PATIENCE

Some correspondents are anxious for my views on Council-entry[1] and Hindu-Muslim questions. Others are equally insistent that I make no hasty pronouncement. I am myself most eager to express my opinion on both these questions, but I want to avoid all avoidable mistakes. I owe a duty to those who differ from me. They are valued co-workers. They love their country just as much as I claim to do. Some of them have recent sacrifices to their credit to which I can lay no claim. They have a longer first-hand experience of the country than I have. Their opinions, therefore, deserve all the respect and consideration that are due to their position and ability. Above all, I must not embarrass them by any ill-considered opinion. Theirs is a thankless task. The Government have rejected every advance made by them. The former have stood defiant behind their armed entrenchments even in such trifles (to them) as the removal of the prohibition against Mr. Horniman[2] and the release of Maulana Hasrat Mohani[3]. In these circumstances, it would be improper on my part without the utmost consideration to say anything that may in any way disturb the plans the Swarajists may develop for meeting the emergency. I am trying to grasp the situation and understand their viewpoint. Nothing can possibly be lost by patience. Haste may cause unnecessary mischief.

The same may be said of the Hindu-Muslim question with greater emphasis. It is a problem that requires the most delicate handling. Every thought has to be examined. Every word weighed. A hasty adjective may cause an explosion. Though, therefore, I hold decided views on the question and am most anxious to express them, I must forbear. Both Hindus and Mussalmans occupying front positions in the community are asking me not to say a word without fully studying the situation. I have a letter which goes so far as to say that I shall know little until I have travelled and seen things for myself. Without going so far with

[1] *Vide* "Thoughts on Council-entry", before 11-4-1924, and the item following it.

[2] B. G. Horniman (1873-1948); journalist and politician; editor of *The Bombay Chronicle*. He was deported from India in April 1919 and could return only in 1926.

[3] 1875-1951; nationalist Muslim leader, took active part in the Khilafat movement.

my correspondents, I give my assurance to them and all who think with them that I shall not write or say a word without a careful and prayerful study of the question. For me the attainment of swaraj depends not upon what the English Cabinet thinks or says but entirely upon a proper, satisfactory and lasting solution of the thorny problem. Without it all before us is dark. With it swaraj is within immediate reach.

Whilst, therefore, these conferences are going on, I respectfully urge those who are interested in my opinion on these important questions to go on with the constructive programme. Every yard of yarn spun or khaddar woven is a step towards swaraj. Everyone who refrains from harbouring an evil thought of his Hindu or Mussalman brother as the case may be contributes to the solution. Every writer in the Press who economizes his adjectives and ceases to impute motives or inflame public opinion makes easy the path to a proper solution. The other day *The Times of India* published illuminating extracts from the vernacular Press showing the present mentality of some writers. They tell us how not to do the thing. Granting that a Hindu or a Mussalman utters a hasty word, it is no business of a Pressman who wishes well to his country immediately to advertise it. It would be criminal to exaggerate such blunders. I am not sure that the statements advertised in those extracts were even made by the parties concerned. No expression of opinion from anybody is needed to demonstrate the necessity of being accurate, of curbing our tongues and checking our pens.

Young India, 3-4-1924

258. TO READERS OF "HINDI NAVAJIVAN"

Thursday, Phalgun Krishna 14 [*April 3, 1924*]

It has always been a matter of regret to me that, although I am the editor of *Hindi Navajivan*, I do not write anything for it. For this reason I do not consider myself fit to be its editor.

I accepted the post of editor out of my affection for Shri Jamnalal Bajaj. I cannot be satisfied so long as the paper carries only translations from Gujarati and English. I shall now try, when I have time, to write something for *Hindi Navajivan*.

But there is some other reason for my writing this article. I see that *Hindi Navajivan* runs at a loss. At one time it had 12,000 subscribers, but now their number is 1,400. For *Hindi Navajivan*

to be self-supporting, it needs 4,000 subscribers. If this number of subscribers is not forthcoming soon, it is my intention to close down the paper. I have always held the view—which became strengthened while I was in jail—that newspapers that are not self-supporting and have to depend on advertisements should be closed down. In keeping with this principle, it is desirable that *Hindi Navajivan*, if it cannot pay its way, should be discontinued. If you feel the need for this paper, a very good way to increase the circulation is for you to try and enrol your friends as subscribers. I may as well let you know that I have expressed a similar intention with regard to *Young India*. It is only on moral or spiritual grounds that I base this decision of mine.

The Gujarati *Navajivan*—although it has had to bear the brunt of the losses incurred by *Young India* and *Hindi Navajivan*—has shown profits. In the five years of its life it has saved Rs. 50,000. This amount will be spent on public work—on the propagation of the charkha and khadi. You shall find details of it in translations from the Gujarati. If *Hindi Navajivan* shows a profit, the money will be used for spreading Hindi in the South. I feel that there is a great need to propagate in the South a form of Hindi which is simple and easily understood by Hindus and Muslims alike. If you approve of the idea, please do your best to push the sale of *Hindi Navajivan*.

Your servant,
MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Hindi]
Hindi Navajivan, 6-4-1924

259. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

Thursday [April 3, 1924][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letters. I follow what you say about Kashi. I had Chi. Prabhudas examined by Dr. Dalal, also by a famous Poona *vaidya* who had been here yesterday. Both approve of his living on a milk diet. At present he takes four and a half pounds of milk and is stronger than he was before. Dr. Deshmukh also examined him and gave the same opinion. I have made full inquiries about the sea here. Thousands of people bathe in it. What

[1] The postmark carries this date.

you have heard relates to the sea at Versova[1]. Here everyone bathes without any fear.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: S.N. 8658

260. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Thursday [April 3, 1924][2]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I have your letters. I shall by and by write in *Navajivan* and *Young India* about the things you have mentioned and give what explanations I can. Dr. Dalal thoroughly examined Radha and other patients. Besides, an eminent *vaidya* from Poona is also here. She is getting stronger under his treatment. She sleeps by my side. I shall not give more details. I shall not now send away Ramdas from me. I will gladly give him some time myself. I have already talked about this to Surendra. I cannot say when they will come. I hope to reach there. . . ,[3] and do not propose afterwards to go out for at least a month and a half.

Blessings from
BAPU

CHI. MAGANLAL GANDHI
SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM
SABARMATI

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 6041. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

261. INTERVIEW TO "THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"

[April 3, 1924]

In spite of the heavy burden of work Mahatma Gandhi has begun to shoulder even in his days of convalescence, he was pleased to accord an interview to our representative who called at his abode at Juhu yesterday morning. The callers yesterday morning included Messrs Shuaib Qureshi, D. Chamanlal and Dr. Kitchlew.

[1] A village near Andheri, suburb of Bombay

[2] From the postmark

[3] Words undecipherable in the source

"It is not my purpose to trouble you again so soon after last week's long talk we had," said our representative apologizing for trespassing on his quiet and rest, and as he was reminded of Mahatmaji's appeal in Gujarati in the course of which it was stated:

"The capital of energy at my disposal is very small, and I want to utilize it only in service. I wish to resume editorship of *Navajivan* and *Young India* from next week. And I need absolute quiet for that work. If all my time and energy are taken up in seeing and entertaining you, it will not be possible for me to edit the weeklies in the way I desire."[1]

"Will you not, however, make just a short statement to me on the result of the conference you are holding these days with the Swarajist leaders and others?" our representative inquired.

Mahatmaji was in an exceedingly humorous disposition. He remarked that he was still a patient and little could be expected of him on the present situation till he finished his study of the current events and had had a full talk with the leaders who were there. However, he light-heartedly suggested, as he laughed heartily, our representative could "pad" his interview with the descriptions of shady palm groves and the gently rolling ocean.

Hindu-Muslim unity and untouchability both were questions of paramount importance and it was not decided whether one of them would be tackled first or both of them would be dealt with simultaneously, replied Gandhiji to the question whether he had definitely arrived at a decision, as a result of consultations, to handle one or both of these vital problems.

The Bombay Chronicle, 4-4-1924

262. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[After *April 3, 1924*][2]

BHAI MAHADEV,

This much should of course be taken. It will certainly do for Gujarati *Navajivan*. If, therefore, you can drop some other items and include these, please do so or take out a supplement. Do what you think is proper.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 8571

[1] *Vide* "Appeal to the Public", 24-3-1924.

[2] The letter seems to have been written after Gandhiji resumed the editorship of his weeklies, which he did on April 3.

263. TELEGRAM TO VYKOM SATYAGRAHIS

[*April 4, 1924*]

BEING OVERWHELMED WITH WORK, UNABLE WRITE. YOU ARE DOING SPLENDIDLY. CONTINUE AS YOU HAVE BEGUN.

From a cutting from *The Hindu*: S.N. 10300

264. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

POST ANDHERI,
April 4, 1924

MY DEAR RAJAGOPALACHARI,

I have your most touching letter. I was at peace with myself immediately after that morning note. Ramu's unhesitating acceptance of my suggestion added pleasure to that peace. What is going on today with Motilalji and others can hardly be described as a conference, though I have used that word myself in the columns of *Young India*.[1] We are having desultory talks. Hakimji merely discussed the Hindu-Moslem problem. He is gone already. Malaviyaji is still here. He too talks only about Hindu-Moslem unity. Motilalji alone is naturally interested in the Council-entry because he has to shape his policy. We have, however, come to no conclusions, and I am not going to be in a hurry. I see that I cannot even draw up a tentative statement. So much for the conference or the talks.

A suggestion has been made that I should make no declaration of my views without a conference of young workers. The idea has appealed to me, and I am thinking seriously of issuing a general invitation[2] through *Young India* for some day this month for all workers who are interested in the Congress programme and who would give me the benefit of their advice. Please wire your opinion on this matter and send me also a convenient date. I should like you to be present. Is it not possible for you to pass a month with Jamnalalji? He is at Nasik where the climate is dry and salubrious. He gets the Poona physician also now and

[1] *Vide* "Plea for Patience", 3-4-1924.
[2] *Vide* "Notes", 17-4-1924.

then. I would very much like you to give him a full trial. He has been here at Devdas's instance to see my fellow-patients. He insisted that you should not take any food but papaw and raisins.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. C. RAJAGOPALACHARI
EXTENSION
SALEM

From a photostat: S.N. 8652

265. LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

POST ANDHERI,
April 4, 1924

MY DEAR JAIRAMDAS,

You will have read in the papers of the visit to Bombay of Malaviyaji, Motilalji, Hakimji and other leaders. What is going on today at Andheri can hardly be described as a conference, though I have used that word myself in the columns of *Young India*. We are having desultory talks. Hakimji merely discussed the Hindu-Moslem problem. He is gone already. Malaviyaji is still here. He too talks only about Hindu-Moslem unity. Motilalji alone is naturally interested in the Council-entry because he has to shape his policy. We have, however, come to no conclusions, and I am not going to be in a hurry. I see that I cannot even draw up a tentative statement. So much for the "conference" or the talks.

A suggestion has been made that I should make no declaration of my views without a conference of young workers. The idea has appealed to me, and I am thinking seriously of issuing a general invitation through *Young India* for some day this month for all workers who are interested in the Congress programme and who would give me the benefit of their advice. Please wire your opinion on this matter and send me also a convenient date.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM
HYDERABAD (SIND)

From a photostat: S.N. 8653

266. *LETTER TO R. B. PALKAR*

POST ANDHERI,
April 4, 1924

MY DEAR PALKAR,

You will forgive me for not writing to you earlier. I wanted to say how good and kind you were all the time I was in the Sassoon Hospital. Yours was a most trying work, and though I rarely came in direct touch with you, I kept myself informed of the devotion and application with which you performed the service voluntarily undertaken by you. At best it was a thankless task turning away or keeping waiting anxious and impatient visitors. Pray accept my thanks for your services. I shall always recall the pleasant memories of kind services done to me by so many friends whilst I was lying on a sick-bed in the hospital. Yours will not be among the least of them.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. R. B. PALKAR
BHARAT SWARAJYA SEWAK
NEAR BALAJI VYAPARI SANGH
BUDHWAR [PETH], POONA CITY

From a copy: S.N. 8654

267. *LETTER TO C. A. PEREIRA*

POST ANDHERI,
April 4, 1924

DEAR DR. PEREIRA,

I have your letter of the 26th ultimo.

I am sure that your visit to the leaders of Hindu thought can only advance the cause you have at heart. I do not know that any particular season is better than any other for the purpose of a mission, but for the sake of comfort, the cold season is decidedly preferable.

I must confess my gross ignorance of the subject you refer to. I do not know who is at present in possession, nor do I know on what title the present possessor bases his claim, how and when were the Buddhists ousted from possession. I have visited the

shrine myself. Probably you know that there is no restriction upon visitors, nor is any fee demanded for admission.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. C. A. PEREIRA
"TAMUND"
BAMBELA PITIYA ROAD
COLOMBO

From a photostat: S.N. 8655

268. LETTER TO H. R. SCOTT

POST ANDHERI,
April 4, 1924

DEAR MR. SCOTT,

I was delighted to receive your note.

I thank you for your good wishes. I did receive the translation of Fosdick's *Manhood of the Master*, for which I thank you. You will also please convey my thanks to Mr. Manilal Parekh for asking you to send me a copy. I confess my ignorance of the original.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

THE REV. H. R. SCOTT
MISSION HOUSE
SURAT

From a photostat: S.N. 8656

269. *LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI*

POST ANDHERI,
April 4, 1924

MY DEAR MAHADEV,

Please send at the earliest opportunity with someone coming here the file of *Indian Opinion* and Solomon Report[1] if available.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

3 o'clock morning[2]

[PS.]

Kingdom of Heaven—*Moksha*

Paradise—*Swarga*

About the rest, some other time.

This is what is called bungling. I had asked him to write on his own, but the poor man did not understand. Whose fault was this? Mine, of course. Both the changes you have made in *Y.I.* were correct. Keep up this practice.

From a photostat: S.N. 8657

[1] This was the report of a Commission appointed to inquire, among other things, into the Indian marriages question and repeal of the £3 tax in South Africa; *vide* Vol. XII, pp. 396-9, 615-21.

[2] Golikere, who was at this time working as Gandhiji's typist, typed the postcard and left it for Gandhiji to sign. Gandhiji signed it in Gujarati early morning the next day and added the remarks which follow. These had to be clarified in a letter a week later; *vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 11-4-1924.

270. LETTER TO PAUL RICHARDS

POST ANDHERI,
April 5, 1924

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter[1] of the 3rd March. I received also, some time before your long letter, a brief letter signed by you and Mons. Romain Rolland.[2]

Ever since my release, I have been trying to feel my way. The situation has altered so much. Of one thing, however, I am certain. My faith in non-violence is unquenchable. All you can do there is to spread the truth of non-violence wherever you go.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

MONS. PAUL RICHARDS
138, ROUTE DE CHENE
GENEVA
SWITZERLAND

From a photostat: G.N. 871

[1] Paul Richards wrote of his travels in the Middle East and Southern Europe and of his taking khadi "from East to West on his person". Richards had met Romain Rolland, whom he called the 'Rishi of the West', in Switzerland.

[2] Dated February 17, this letter read: "We join together to send you our message of love and admiration. There you are free again, after the glorious shade of the jail, in the sunshine of the battlefield. May India be ready this time. And may Europe also hear your voice in her wilderness. Yours is the love of India and the service of humanity."

271. LETTER TO THE NIZAM OF HYDERABAD

POST ANDHERI,
April 5, 1924

TO
HIS EXALTED HIGHNESS THE NIZAM OF HYDERABAD
HYDERABAD
(DECCAN)

YOUR EXALTED HIGHNESS,

I beg to acknowledge Your Exalted Highness's letter of the 1st April.[1] I received also the letter of the 1st ultimo to which I replied on the 5th ultimo.[2] I am surprised that the reply did not reach Your Exalted Highness. I now enclose a copy thereof.

I remain,
Your Exalted Highness's faithful friend,

Encl.

From a photostat: S.N. 8428

272. LETTER TO H. WALTER HEEGSTRA

POST ANDHERI,
April 5, 1924

DEAR MR. HEEGSTRA,

I thank you for your letter.

This is my reply to the first question: My platform is India. My goal is to attain self-government for India. The means adopted to attain the end are Non-violence and Truth. Therefore, Indian self-government not only means no menace to the world, but will be of the greatest benefit to humanity if she attains her end through those means and those means alone. The spinning-wheel is

1 It read: ". . . if the Beraris decline to avail themselves of this . . . autonomy now within their grasp, (which the Nizam has spontaneously offered to them on condition [that] they express to the British Government their desire to come back under the Hyderabad State), then the logical conclusion to be drawn from this would be that they must give up all claims to self-government for which so much noise and agitation is now going on all over India. . . ."

2 *Vide* "Letter to the Nizam of Hyderabad", 5-3-1924.

the external symbol of internal reform, and its universal re-adoption in India ensures her economic salvation and frees millions of Indian peasants from growing pauperism.

My message to the businessmen of America is: Understand the inner meaning of the message of the spinning-wheel and you will probably find the solution for the World Peace which I know so many Americans sincerely desire.

I am sorry I have to disappoint you about my portrait because, as I told you, I do not possess a single portrait or print.

I thank you for the book you have sent me, and in accordance with your suggestion, I am keeping it.

Pray give my regards to Mrs. Heegstra and accept same for yourself.

Yours sincerely,

H. WALTER HEEGSTRA, ESQ.
SHEPHERD'S HOTEL
CAIRO (EGYPT)

From a photostat: S.N. 8662

273. *LETTER TO V. V. DASTANE*

POST ANDHERI,
April 5, 1924

MY DEAR DASTANE,

I have seen the Mulshi Peta papers. I have not been able to go through the whole literature. It appears to me that the movement[1] has got to be dropped for two reasons or rather for three:

(1) I understand that the vast majority of the men affected have accepted compensation and that the few who have not cannot perhaps even be traced.

(2) The dam is nearly half-finished and its progress cannot be permanently stopped. There seems to me to be no ideal behind the movement.

(3) The leader of the movement is not a believer out and out in non-violence. This defect is fatal to success. I see the illu-

[1] *Vide* Vol. XX, pp. 66-7.

minating verses at the end of one of the pamphlets giving a definition of true dharma.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. V. V. DASTANE
C/o CONGRESS COMMITTEE
JALGAON (KHANDESH)

From a photostat: S.N. 8663

274. *LETTER TO BADRUL HUSSAIN*

POST ANDHERI,
April 5, 1924

MY DEAR BADRUL HUSSAIN[1],

I rejoiced to receive your letter and that too on swadeshi paper. You have certainly neglected me though I have enquired about you of everyone who has come from Hyderabad and who, I thought, was likely to know you. What have you been doing with your health? Young men cannot afford to adopt the pace of old men. I expect you, therefore, to be up and doing long before I can. Do come as soon as you are healthy and can undertake a long journey.

Yours sincerely,

BADRUL HUSSAIN, ESQ.
ABID MANZIL
HYDERABAD (DECCAN)

From a copy: S.N. 8664

[1] It is likely that 'Badrul Hussain' is a slip for 'Badrul Hassan', author of the *The Drink and Drug Evil in India*, to which Gandhiji contributed a foreword; *vide* "Foreword", pp. 17-8.

275. *LETTER TO H. M. PEREIRA*

POST ANDHERI,
April 5, 1924

MY DEAR PEREIRA,

I thank you for your letter of the 25th February last.

I have received the interesting cutting you have sent me. Please continue to send cuttings that you may come across in connection with the national movement.

I remember your father well. What are you doing there?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

H. M. PEREIRA, ESQ.
MERRICK
LONG ISLAND
NEW YORK, U.S.A.

From a photostat: S.N. 8666

276. *LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR*

POST ANDHERI,
April 5, 1924

DEAR MR. JAYAKAR,

I am deeply thankful to you for the attention you are giving Ramdas. I think that the regular training he is having at present is likely to do him good and steady him.

I hope your mother is making satisfactory progress. Please give her my very kind regards.

Yours sincerely,

M. R. JAYAKAR, ESQ.
391, THAKURDWAR
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 8667

277. LETTER TO MULK RAJ

POST ANDHERI,
April 5, 1924

DEAR LALA MULK RAJ,

I have your letter of the 1st instant, for which I thank you.

Deshbandhu Das has not yet come here. Pandit Malaviyaji had to leave for Benares before finishing the conversations. He returns again at the end of the month. Pandit Motilalji is here, and I hope to discuss the Jallianwala Bagh Memorial as soon as the present deliberations are finished. I shall take care of the original plans and return them after use.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

LALA MULK RAJ
AMRITSAR

From a photostat: S.N. 8668

278. LETTER TO J. M. GOKARN

POST ANDHERI,
April 5, 1924

DEAR MR. GOKARN,

I have had your letter regarding the venue of the Congress in Karnatak. I am already in correspondence with Mr. Gangadharrao.[1] I want to do all I can to prevent a prolongation of the dispute referred to by you.

Please note that even if I was Dictator in 1922, I am no longer that now.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

J. M. GOKARN, ESQ.
AMBEWADI, "D" BLOCK
GIRGAUM
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 8669

[1] *Vide* the following item.

279. LETTER TO GANGADHARRAO DESHPANDE

POST ANDHERI,
April 5, 1924

MY DEAR GANGADHARRAO,

I have your letter of the 31st March. I have seen it only today. As I do not know the latest development, I am not writing anything in *Young India*, but I am sending a letter to Sadashivrao[1]. Herewith a copy of that letter.[2]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Encl.

SJT. GANGADHARRAO B. DESHPANDE
BELGAUM

From a photostat: S.N. 8670

280. LETTER TO D. HANUMANTRAO

POST ANDHERI,
April 5, 1924

MY DEAR HANUMANTRAO,

I have your letter. You need not apologize for its length. It is all very interesting and shows the deep interest you are taking in the Ashram and Nature Cure. My difficulty is to digest milk made out of nuts. I tried it during my convalescence after that violent attack of dysentery. I should love to give it a re-trial, but I do not want just now to make any risky experiment in dietetics. The earth bandage you suggest is not now required because the wound is already healed.

With love to you all,

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 8671

[1] Karnad Sadashiv Rao (1881-1937); lawyer, social worker and Congress leader from South Kanara, Mysore; four times president, Karnatak Provincial Congress Committee

[2] Not available

281. LETTER TO EDWARD MURPHY[1]

POST ANDHERI,
April 5, 1924

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of good wishes.

You ask for a word from me. Here it is: There is no search greater than that of Truth. The only means of finding it out is through non-violence in its extreme form. It is because we have ignored it that we seek to impose by force what we consider is truth upon others.

Your sincere friend,

EDWARD MURPHY, ESQ.
SECRETARY, THE GANDHI CLUB
YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION
NEWBURGH
NEW YORK, U.S.A.

From a photostat: S.N. 8673

[1] This was in reply to Edward Murphy's letter of February 27, in the course of which he had said: "Since the club bears your name, its object is to study, discuss and read of your life and works. We find the study of your life very interesting." S.N. 8381

282. LETTER TO GORDON LAW

POST ANDHERI,
April 5, 1924

DEAR MR. GORDON LAW,

I thank you for your letter of the 27th February.

I remember our meeting[1] and also your having given me Moffatt's Translation of the New Testament.[2]

I have sent a reply to the Gandhi Club also.

I thank you for your good wishes.

I am sending you a copy of *Young India*, the first number after resumption of my editorship, and I am asking the Management to send a copy regularly to you.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

GORDON LAW, ESQ., M.B.E.
THE GANDHI CLUB
YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION
NEWBURGH
NEW YORK, U.S.A.

From a photostat: S.N. 8672

283. LETTER TO DR. M. A. ANSARI

POST ANDHERI,
April 5, 1924

DEAR DR. ANSARI,

I have read your pathetic letter to Devdas.

I have already sent my assurance to Mahomed Ali that I am going to issue no statement till I have met him. You will see how I have met the growing demand for some statement from me. I am myself eager to make my views known on the Hindu-Moslem question, and I am now held back only by Mahomed Ali's desire for postponement, as also Pandit Malaviyaji's, with whom I had a fairly long chat yesterday on this very question. But you do not want me to keep silent about the Tibbia College incident, for

[1] In 1920, at Lahore

[2] Law had also presented Gandhiji a book on children by an American author.

instance. I want to deal with that as also the charge against Mahomed Ali. I have not got his reply to Swami Shraddhanand. Though I am trying to overtake the vernacular Press, it is very difficult to do the thing single-handed. If you could send me all the choice cuttings from both Hindu and Moslem newspapers, I would like to deal with them with all the firmness I can command. So much for the general question.

Not a day passes when I do not think of the Brothers and their sorrows. The Khilafat is dear to every Mussulman, but the Ali Brothers have made its prestige and honour their life-work. I can therefore understand how the decision of the Turkish Assembly must have shaken them. Amina's death and Shaukat Ali's serious illness filled the cup of sorrows. How I wish I was by your side to nurse Shaukat Ali back to his former health and vigour! It is so difficult to think of him lying prostrate on a sick-bed. May God soon restore him to health! I wish I could go to Bombay to meet him when you arrive. But I must not make the attempt. One such journey may mean nothing, but you know my method. If I break the self-imposed restriction once, I shall have to do it many a time, and I should be nowhere. Even in this retreat I have no rest. Crowds of visitors would not leave me alone, and from today I am commencing some hours' silence practically every day so that I might have some quiet and I might also be able to overtake the correspondence which is daily growing in volume. I have already added Wednesday as a day of silence to Monday so that I may be able to cope with the editing of *Young India* and *Navajivan*.

I should not dream of Shaukat Ali coming to Juhu in his present state of health. You must therefore take him to Matheran, and when you can spare a day yourself, I certainly want to see you. Mahomed Ali will bring me all the messages from Shaukat Ali and that would be quite sufficient to go on with. As far as I am concerned, there is not much really that I now want to know except the views of yourself and the Brothers and of a few others whose opinions I value. My mind is practically made up, and I am becoming impatient to deliver my soul.

My love to you, the Brothers and all other friends, and please remember me to Begum Saheba.

Yours sincerely,

DR. M. A. ANSARI
1, DARYAGANJ
DELHI

From a photostat: S.N. 8674

284. LETTER TO R. H. NARIELWALA

POST ANDHERI,
April 5, 1924

DEAR MR. NARIELWALA,

I thank you for your letter enclosing a ten-rupee note.

I am glad you did not believe the statement that I would love less those who did not wear khaddar. I am sure that not one of my co-workers would make such a statement to anyone, but there was a self-appointed volunteer in Poona who must have spoken to you in these offensive terms.

As for the wearing of khaddar, why do you associate all the noble qualities with it? Surely, in that event no one is fit to wear khaddar garments. The wearing of khaddar should be considered on its own merits, whether from the economic aspect or from the political. As a matter of fact, the political is a corollary to the economic. I would not hesitate to urge the most viciously-minded person to use khaddar in preference to foreign cloth or even Indian mill-made cloth, because thereby we put the money paid for carding, spinning and weaving into the pockets of our poor brothers and sisters. Whilst, therefore, I would very much like you to separate the wearing of khaddar from acquisition of noble qualities, and I doubt not that the adoption of khaddar will enable you all the more to cultivate those qualities.

Yours sincerely,

R. H. NARIELWALA, ESQ.
ROSE LEA, ALTAMONT ROAD
CUMBALA HILL
BOMBAY

From a copy: S.N. 8675

285. LETTER TO SIR DINSHAW MANECKJI PETIT

POST ANDHERI,
April 5, 1924

DEAR SIR DINSHAW PETIT,

I thank you for your letter of the 31st ultimo and appreciate the reasons you give for your decisions against Mrs. Sorabjee.[1]

I thank you too for your kind inquiry. I am making slow but steady progress.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SIR DINSHAW MANECKJI PETIT
41, NICOL ROAD
BALLARD ESTATE
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 8676

286. LETTER TO DR. G. B. TALWALKAR

POST ANDHERI,
April 5, 1924

DEAR DR. TALWALKAR,

I thank you for your letter.

After I wrote to you, Dr. Dalal paid his weekly visit to examine my progress. I had all the three patients examined by him also, and he suggested cod-liver oil injections for both Kikiben and Radhaben, and prescribed some pills and mixture for Maniben. The Poona physician came after him and he also examined the three patients. He felt very confident of success, and all the three are at the present moment under his treatment. They appear to me to be better than they were, but I ascribe all the little improvement there is to more cheerful surroundings and the bracing sea air. It is too early yet to say anything about the physician's treatment. When Dr. Dalal comes again, I propose to discuss the Poona physician's treatment of the patients. My unfortunate position is that I have faith in the Ayurvedic drugs, but very little

[1] Gandhiji had appealed to Petit for help to her; *vide* pp. 320-1.

in the diagnosis of the physicians. I therefore never feel sure about a patient under an Ayurvedic physician if his diagnosis is not checked by a trustworthy practitioner under the Western system. I am keeping a chart of the temperatures of all the three patients, and I feel fairly safe so long as the temperature is not high and the patients keep cheerful. Do please give me further guidance if you consider it necessary.

Yours sincerely,

DR. G. B. TALWALKAR
AHMEDABAD

From a copy: S.N. 8677

287. LETTER TO MANGAL SINGH AND RAJA SINGH

POST ANDHERI,
April 5, 1924

DEAR FRIENDS,

I have received a copy of the *Onward Special* dated 17th March. I was deeply hurt on reading it. Don't you think that it reeks with gross exaggeration and falsehood? Those of you who believe in the religious nature of the struggle should wash your hands clean of these tactics. If *Onward* is to be run as the official organ, you should have a sober and truthful editor.

Yours sincerely,

SARDAR MANGAL SINGH AND SARDAR RAJA SINGH
AMRITSAR

From a photostat: S.N. 9953

288. LETTER TO K. M. PANIKKAR

POST ANDHERI,
April 5, 1924

MY DEAR PANIKKAR,

I have your letter of the 1st instant.[1] What you say does not surprise me. The friends who were here will tell you what I had

[1] Panikkar had written earlier on March 29 forwarding to Gandhiji a report of an informal inquiry he had conducted into the jail occurrences.

to say to them. It is so difficult for me to say anything till I hear from the friends with reference to the memorandum I have given them. Do you get all your letters regularly and without any tampering? How is it possible to issue any statement after reading the *Onward Special*? There is not a trace of the religious spirit about the writer, and it is so highly coloured and untruthful. It is impossible for me to throw myself heart and soul into a struggle which, claiming to be religious, requires to be supported by inflammatory and untruthful writings. You may read this to our friends. Yours is a very delicate position. I hope you will have the strength and the courage to live up to the creed we profess.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. M. PANIKKAR
AKALI SAHAYAK BUREAU
AMRITSAR

From a photostat: S.N. 9954

289. TELEGRAM TO ALMORA CONGRESS COMMITTEE[1]

[On or after *April 5, 1924*]

THANKS. UNABLE ACCEPT KIND HOSPITALITY.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 8679

290. LETTER TO V. G. DESAI

Saturday [After *April 5, 1924*][2]

BHAISHRI VALJI,

Indeed, there was dearth of matter last time too. You must not keep awake out of obstinacy.

We have no need to employ more men. You may, therefore, carry out the last of your suggestions right now. I shall see to it

[1] This was in reply to the telegram from secretary, Almora Congress Committee, dated April 5, 1924, which read: "Congratulations. Happy new year Almora climate excellent for recuperation. Bungalow arranged. Kindly do come."

[2] It is presumed that the letter was written by Gandhiji from Juhu after he resumed the editorial responsibility of *Young India*, on April 3, 1924. The Saturday following fell on April 5.

that adequate stamps are affixed. I hope the mistake will not be repeated. You did well in changing 'Imposture'. The title you have given brings out the sense more clearly. There will be no difficulty in changing the order of the items under "Notes", so long as they are not interrelated.

Introduce one change. The practice of reserving the fourth page for the leader may be discontinued. Let the leading article commence from wherever the "Notes" end. Only it should start with a fresh column so that we can dispense with the practice of giving the name of *Young India* and date-line inside.

I have not received a single copy of the current issue of *Y.I.*

I see that more than five columns of matter are already lying ready with you and I send a little today. More I shall be able to send only on Monday. I hope to send some tomorrow also. I shall try not to send anything on Tuesday. I may send at the most two columns.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: C.W. 6201. Courtesy : V. G. Desai

291. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[Before *April 6, 1924*]

BHAISHRI MAHADEV,

I send you herewith eight chapters of the history of satyagraha.[1] See that not a single correction in it is left out. You will see that they are all essential. I have cancelled the last paragraph.

Why are you still sore about that translation? A '*ja*' may be placed at the wrong place. There is nothing whatever to be said against [your translation of] 'Kingdom of Heaven'.

There are two remedies for you. One, that you should forget your malady. It may be a sort of mental hypochondria, in the same way that some imagine a physical malady where there is none. We should know our faults, but at the same time should not ex-

[1] These were the first in a series which started appearing in *Navajivan* from April 6; the English version of the chapters started appearing in *Young India* from April 17. The latter was published in book form, as *Satyagraha in South Africa*, in 1928. The Gujarati edition was released in two parts during 1924-25.

aggerate them. There is always a middle path in all things, which is really not the middle but the true path. The other remedy is to throw off your cowardice. Being a coward, you make Durga suffer, and for the same reason you beat that coachman. Why did you get frightened because he beat you? Cowards also lose patience sometimes. You are not lacking in love, but you do not examine yourself carefully. You have no self-confidence. Why don't you always say to yourself, "I will never give way to fear", "I will always correct myself whenever I make a mistake"? As a last resort, you have the *mantra* of Rama[nama]. Did you read the letter I wrote to Majli on the subject?[1] You must have got a copy.

Do write a letter about Mahomed Ali. Such questions may arise in the minds of others also. If you write, I shall get an opportunity to give an explanation. In any case, I shall write something [about it] tomorrow. Write after my article reaches you. We shall put Durga under the treatment of the Poona *vaidya*. Will she come here on Thursday? The *vaidya* comes on Thursday. Let her come to stay here for a few days. Do expect some fresh crowding here. In a dharmsala everyone can come and find room. Is it truly a place of dharma? If it is, there should be no need for hesitation.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: S.N. 8762

292. *INTERVIEW TO THE ASSOCIATED PRESS*

[BOMBAY,
On or before *April 6, 1924*]

I have carefully read Mr. Duncan's[2] speech delivered by him at the second reading of the Class Areas Bill in the Union Assembly. I have not before me the letters exchanged between General Smuts and myself.[3] I have sent for the file of the *Indian Opinion* which I have at Satyagraha Ashram, Sabarmati. It contains the text of the two letters, but for my purpose I do not really need them. I am surprised at Mr. Duncan's assertion. The two letters

[1] *Vide* pp. 302-3.

[2] Patrick Duncan, member of the South African Cabinet, Governor-General in 1927

[3] *Vide* Vol. XII.

do not form the whole of the agreement. It is necessary to remember that the Indian struggle commenced with the Asiatic Registration Act of 1907, which was vetoed as an ordinance and passed, almost word for word, by the first responsible legislature of the Transvaal. Finally, in 1914, the struggle reached its climax and embraced all the four provinces of the Union. 'Vested rights' has been a phrase requiring interpretation from time to time. My contention is that the whole tenor of the agreement pledged the Union Government not only not to curtail vested rights, but gradually to remove the restrictions that existed in 1914.

I have already cited Sir Benjamin Robertson and Mr. Andrews as my witnesses in support of my contention. I have asked Mr. Andrews, who was present at the negotiations that were going on between General Smuts and myself, and he completely supports me.[1] The Indian struggle extending over a long period of eight years could not have been undertaken so that, after a full and honourable settlement, it was open to the Union Government to take away the rights already possessed by the Indians.

The whole of Mr. Duncan's speech is a curious exhibition of inconsistency and refusal to do the right thing. As the speech itself shows, the Class Areas Bill is introduced not because it is necessary for the conservation of European predominance, but because interested Europeans are clamouring for it. Mr. Duncan himself admits that the Indian population is gradually decreasing, because immigration has ceased. His distinction between segregation and separation is, to say the least, hypocritical. And in spite of his statement to the contrary, I venture to state that, whatever the idea underlying the Bill may be, its effect must be to ruin the Indian settlers.

The Hindu, 7-4-1924

[1] For Andrews's statement substantiating the position taken by Gandhiji, *vide* Appendix XII.

293. TO READERS OF "NAVAJIVAN"

After a separation of two years, I meet you through this letter. I look upon *Navajivan* as my weekly letter to my Gujarati brothers and sisters. Through it I have come closer to you. As for myself, I can say that separation has strengthened rather than weakened the ties that bind us together. Ever since my release, I have been longing to get in touch with you again. I used to be overwhelmed with joy whenever I thought in jail of your affection for me. I used to wonder when I would be able to place before you my reflections while in jail. I thank God that today I can do so.

I beg you not to feel bored with me if I am not able to present new ideas to you. I have not discovered any new means for our country's progress. The conviction has grown stronger in me that we can gain our objective only by the means we were employing two years ago—and by no other means. How much faith I have in these means you will see in the pages of *Navajivan*. But will the continuous discussion of the same means in *Navajivan* be of any use? Will that not weary you? You alone can answer the question. If you get bored, you will stop reading *Navajivan*.

I insist that *Navajivan* should not be run at a loss. I would regard it as being run successfully only if it could pay its way through subscriptions.

Truth is as old as creation. Yet we have not got tired of it—truth is not out of our mind even when we indulge in untruth. Truth is our yard-stick. We relish as ever new the lesson we draw from our experience of it. *Navajivan*, which serves and will continue to serve you, has placed and will continue to place before you chiefly lessons of experience; hence I have no misgiving about its future. When Shankerlal Banker and Indulal Yagnik entrusted the editorship of *Navajivan* to me[1], I had told them that neither my co-workers nor I wanted for ourselves the profits out of the paper, even if there were any. They would be utilized for some sort of public work.

You have exceeded all expectations. You have not only borne the expenses of *Navajivan*, but also made good the loss incurred in running *Hindi Navajivan* and the English *Young India*. This is not the place to record the labours which my comrades put in during my absence. They have given a new impetus to the activities of

[1] In September 1919

the Navajivan Press. The latter has published many books. I know that so many books would not have been published if I had not gone to jail. In the first place, they would not have had so much enthusiasm. By publishing new books they have made a contribution to the task of winning swaraj early. Moreover, had I not gone to jail, I would not at all have been able to publish so many books. They did not sell the books at cost, but included profit in the sale price. They had no self-interest to serve in doing so, but they knew that, if there was any profit, it would be used only for some public purpose. If an anna is added to the price of a book, probably it will not put a strain on the buyer; but if there are many buyers, there will certainly be a good profit. I must tell the reader that, just as there was a profit in that enterprise, there was a loss, too, in it. The sales of all books have not been uniform. The result is a big stock of unsold books.

Despite these ups and downs, despite the two other weeklies running at a loss, *Navajivan* has, during the five years of its existence, done so well that we are now in a position to appropriate Rs. 50,000 for public benefit. We intend to use this sum for popularizing the spinning-wheel and khadi through the Gujarat Provincial Congress Committee. In this way, it will be utilized for giving encouragement to poor sisters, the *Antyajas* and other classes of people.

This amount represents a saving. You alone have been mainly instrumental in making it possible. But if I do not acknowledge that my comrades too have contributed to this, I shall be failing in my duty towards them. Swami Anandanand, whose energy, untiring like that of the elements, and matchless devotion to *Navajivan* have enabled this enterprise to expand so much, does not accept even a pie for his labours. Many of those who are engaged in carrying on the routine work content themselves with accepting no more than what is necessary for their bare subsistence. Should I mention the names of those who have been writing for *Navajivan*? They receive absolutely nothing. If we calculate the salaries of all of them at market rates, they will surely amount to at least Rs. 1,000 a month. That works out to Rs. 60,000 for five years. Now you will see that a saving of Rs. 50,000 is no very big achievement. If the number of subscribers to *Navajivan* were not as small as it is, if there were no loss in the publication of books as at present, if *Young India* and *Hindi Navajivan* were to pay their way, a sum larger than Rs. 50,000 could easily have been saved. If any profits should accrue hereafter, we intend to distribute them every year. Swami Anandanand does not like to deposit even a

pie in the bank. He believes, and I agree with him, that public institutions should accumulate no surpluses with them. He tries to act in obedience to God's law, as far as possible. God always provides daily food for all created beings. If many people had not hoarded food in excess of their needs, no one would have died of hunger in this world. Moreover, public institutions have no right to subsist on reserves. A public institution ought to exist only as long as it is popular. When the people stop supporting it, it must close down.

In the case of *Navajivan*, by now five years have passed in this manner and you can easily understand the reasons. Even before I went to jail, we had discussed the question of utilizing profits for a public purpose. Almost all my co-workers too went to prison and that is why the surplus remained unspent.

Let me say one thing more. We do not intend to run *Young India* and *Hindi Navajivan* at a loss much longer. I am sure you will not mind it if those papers are run on profits from *Navajivan*. Perhaps you may wish them run that way. But I believe that it is certainly wrong to run periodicals in that manner. Hence I have been warning the readers of both that, if the loss continues for long, they should be closed down.

Readers, you do not read *Navajivan* for mere pleasure. You read it in order to understand your post of duty in the great *yajna* which is in progress in our country. If the readers of *Navajivan* realize their duty, you may rest assured that swaraj is as good as in your hands.

Only truthful and non-violent soldiers are required in order to win swaraj. A true cause never suffers from dearth of funds. Our weapon is the spinning-wheel; our ammunition hanks of yarn. A friend has made and left with me a spinning-wheel shaped like a gun; he has fixed to it a belt containing cartridges which are nothing but cotton slivers. This friend's labours prove his faith in the spinning-wheel. Up till now we have not been able to win swaraj. This is so not because of any defect in the means, but because of our lack of faith in them, want of effort and skill, and so on. *Navajivan* will strive to bring these defects to your notice again and again with a view to making you render more and more service to the country. I want you to help in the effort.

Your servant,
MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 6-4-1924

294. MY NOTES

Patience Bears Sweet Fruit

I am aware that readers of *Navajivan* are eager to know my views about Council-entry. It is not easy for me, however, to give my views. If it was the first time the problem had been raised, I could have immediately replied that we should not enter the Councils. My opposition to Council-entry stands. The Congress, however, has allowed the advocates of Council-entry to seek elections[1] and some of them have already entered the Councils. Under these circumstances, it is as difficult to answer the question what should be done as it is easy to ask it. Moreover, the advocates of Council-entry are eminent leaders of the nation. I should first understand from them their reasons for this decision. Several of them have made big sacrifices and served the country long. Their patriotism is inferior to nobody else's. I do not, therefore, wish, and leaders too would not expect me, to express any views before studying the question carefully. The value of my views depends on their being the result of careful deliberation. I have also to take care lest I thoughtlessly enable the Government to use my views for its own purposes. Hence I request readers to be patient for the present.

In my humble opinion, the most important task before us today is to repair the breach in Hindu-Muslim unity which has occurred at many places. Till there is genuine love uniting the followers of the different faiths, we should not hope for swaraj or prosperity. I am fully convinced that, without such love, all our efforts will be in vain. I am eager to give my views about how the breach may be repaired, but I request readers to have patience in this matter also. I must discuss this problem, too, with the leaders.

Meeting Leaders

I am being acquainted with the situation by Bharat Bhushan Pandit Malaviya, Hakim Ajmal Khan Saheb, Pandit Motilal and others. I am trying to understand their points of view. Maulana Mahomed Ali has wired to say that he will be coming in a few

[1] The special session of the Congress held at Delhi in September 1923 permitted the Swaraj Party to contest the elections which were to be held by the end of the year. Later, in December when the annual session of the Congress was held at Cocanada, the elected members of the Swaraj Party were granted permission to enter the Councils.

days. Deshbandhu Chitta Ranjan Das[1] is also likely to arrive after the 4th. I am looking forward to meeting them.

MEANWHILE

No one should stop working and wait for my views. Whatever views I may express about Council-entry, they will make no difference in regard to the spinning programme or national education. These two tasks cannot be completed or organized well in a short period even if we devote all our time to them and, till then, we shall not be ready for civil disobedience.

Similarly, whatever the remedy I prescribe for bringing about Hindu-Muslim unity, there is no question that the two communities need to cultivate sincere friendship for each other. No one should doubt, either, that they must help each other. If we reflect thus, we shall realize that, after I have expressed my views, we shall have to carry on with greater determination and efficiency the tasks which engage our attention today. Those persons, therefore, who put their faith in my views should, if they have been neglecting their work, bestir themselves and start working.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 6-4-1924

295. GUJARAT'S EFFORTS

Gujarat's record during the last two years does honour to Gujaratis. Anything which brings honour to Gujarat brings honour also to India. Our movement is such that anything which benefits one province benefits the country as a whole. Hence the entire country has advanced in the measure that Gujarat has advanced. Vallabhbhai's[2] ability is seen in every field. His co-workers are as capable as he is. The satyagraha in Borsad[3] is a shining example of conscientious effort on their part.

[1] 1870-1925; lawyer, orator and founder of the Swaraj Party; President-elect of the Ahmedabad Congress, 1921, but arrested and imprisoned; presided over the Gaya Congress in 1922.

[2] Vallabhbhai Patel (1875-1950); Congress leader of Gujarat; Deputy Prime Minister of India after independence.

[3] This was started in Borsad taluka of the Kheda district in 1923, under the leadership of Vallabhbhai Patel, against the punitive cess imposed on the taluka because the local Government was not convinced that the inhabitants of the area were doing their duty by the State in connection with the dacoities of Babar Deva, an outlaw. The satyagraha was successful and the punitive cess was withdrawn in early 1924.

This satyagraha is in many ways superior to the Kheda satyagraha[1]. The victory in Kheda satyagraha was one which merely saved our face. The victory in the workers' satyagraha[2] in Ahmedabad was tainted by my fast, since that fast had brought undue pressure on the mill-owners.

In Borsad, satyagraha by itself has completely succeeded. It upheld our honour and also protected our material interests, and no other means, legitimate or otherwise, was employed along with it for securing victory.

Let no one think, either, that the victory was made possible by favourable circumstances, since the Governor proved to be a good man. We may thank him for doing justice, but would it have been possible even for a hard-hearted Governor to suppress the pure struggle of Borsad? One who believes in God will also trust that circumstances will favour good men conducting a movement in a good cause. Satyagraha aims at converting an opponent into a friend, that is, at creating circumstances favourable to a good cause.

If Gujarat had rested on its oars after the Borsad satyagraha, no one would have blamed it. But how can a satyagrahi rest? A holiday means for him a fresh task. Satyagraha can also be interpreted to mean self-examination. The people of Borsad did this and saw that they were responsible, partly at any rate, for the imposition of punitive police on their taluka. One error having been understood, others are understood as a matter of course. Hence internal reform is now being carried out there. This work is more valuable, and more difficult, than fighting the Government. Fighting the Government and winning against it was like a weeding operation. Now we have to raise and harvest the crop, and this is a more difficult job and takes more time. I hear that this work is also proceeding very well. The strength and fitness of the people and volunteers of Borsad taluka will be measured by their success in it.

Gujarat is not likely to fail in regard to other aspects of non-co-operation too. No other province has as many non-co-operation schools as Gujarat has. The province has done fairly good work in regard to khadi, removal of untouchability and other items. It need not fear comparison with other provinces. There has been no breach in Hindu-Muslim unity, though I notice some effects

[1] Of 1918; *vide* Vol. XIV.

[2] In March 1918 Gandhiji observed a three days' fast which resulted in a settlement between mill-hands and mill-owners; *vide* Vol. XIV, pp. 267-72.

of the prevailing atmosphere. I congratulate Gujarat on all these efforts. I wish to add, however, that very much more yet remains to be done. The education imparted in national schools has still to be infused with a national spirit. The number of these schools is much too small yet. Efforts need to be made to popularize khadi on a large scale. The spinning-wheel has yet to find a place in every home. A great deal remains to be done in the way of service to untouchables. A large number of hard-working, able and honest volunteers are needed to undertake these activities. As long as we have not made sufficient progress in all these fields, we cannot afford the luxury of resting.

When I think of all these tasks, I remember the quiet of prison life. I know, however, that this is a sign of cowardice. When I was in jail, people carried on a great agitation for my release. But can I enjoy peace outside till we have won swaraj? On coming out of jail, I have realized that being in jail can also be a form of self-indulgence. When I think of what I can contribute to these activities, now that I am out of prison, my weakness pains me and makes me feel ashamed; I am afraid, moreover, that the enthusiasm produced by the demand for my release may now subside and this increases the pain. I, therefore, wish to remind Gujaratis of the warning which I gave two years ago. All our work must aim at swaraj. As long as the entire country remains imprisoned, we can have no rest or peace. I request my Gujarati brothers and sisters to let whatever love they have for me inspire them to take up the tasks connected with the struggle for swaraj.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 6-4-1924

296. SHRIMATI SAROJINI AND KHADI

I received a letter from East Africa when I was in the hospital in Poona. It purported to give Shrimati Sarojini Naidu's views on whether Indians in East Africa should wear khadi. The letter has been lost, but the following is a summary of the views attributed to Shrimati Naidu in that letter :

"It is Gandhi's view that the vow of khadi applies only within India. Not only is there no need to wear khadi outside India, but actually it should be avoided and one should dress like an Englishman. If Gandhi himself went to East Africa, he would not wear a khadi loin-cloth but, like Mr. Verma, put on English dress, and you also should do the same."

I doubt if Shrimati Naidu spoke in this vein. The correspondent from East Africa has asked for my comments on these views. He says that a number of Indians in East Africa dress in khadi and also wear khadi caps. They have been confused by Shrimati Naidu's speech.

I do believe that the vow of khadi is intended to be observed in foreign countries. In some cases, it may be altogether impossible to keep it. Moreover, the object of this vow is to secure economic freedom for India; it is, therefore, not necessary to observe it outside India. But it has never been my view, nor is it today, that khadi should not be used outside India even if it can be used conveniently. I feel, too, that Shrimati Naidu would never express such a view. In countries like East Africa or a place like Aden, khadi can be used without any inconvenience. In South Africa, too, it can be used in summer. That is, there will be no difficulty in wearing it in hot countries. Further, most of the articles for use in the home should be of khadi.

I would, however, take the view that, if we go to a country which grows cotton and which weaves its own khadi, we should wear the cloth produced locally. We should follow in other countries the rule which we apply in our own. When foreigners come to India, it is desirable that they should use goods produced here. We should, therefore, act on the same principle in foreign countries. In countries like East Africa, all cloth is imported from outside. I have never heard that they produce their own cloth. Not only, therefore, do we have every right to wear khadi in those countries, but actually it is our duty, I believe, to do so to the greatest extent possible. As my views developed with the progress of the satyagraha struggle [in South Africa] and the more I felt the need to embrace poverty, I increasingly adopted simplicity in my life. Ultimately, I adopted a dress resembling the Indian labourer's and made of cloth imported from India, the *lungi*[1] and shirt in the Madras style, and kept it up afterwards. In winter, I wore two shirts which I would get stitched from coarse cloth. I had discarded the cap there. I used to meet all Government officials in this very dress. I did not notice that my English friends or the officials took offence at it. Many of my English friends even congratulated me when they saw that I was adopting the mode of life and dress of the labourers whose fight I was leading. My only aim in telling this story here is to explain that it will suffice if we

[1] Dhoti stitched but plaitless

wear in foreign countries a dress which will cover our limbs adequately.

In that passage from Shrimati Naidu's speech, there was one point which deserves notice. Her speech dealt with our undesirable habits. It described many of our shabby and untidy ways. To some extent, this criticism is justified. If a khadi dress, or for that matter any other dress, is soiled or shapeless, it does not please the eye. Tidiness is necessary, not as adornment, but for the sake of cleanliness and decorum. One person may wear a dress made from a particular material carelessly and appear untidy and another person may wear a dress made from the same material properly and appear tidy. A proper dress keeps up decorum and shows our regard for others. We should not fail in these. The border line between a becoming tidiness and adornment is very thin, but it is essential that the distinction should be maintained. It is not at all my intention to suggest that men and women must every now and then look into a mirror and arrange their dress. I have, of course, no such fear about friends in East Africa. The clothes we wear must not be the least dirty. White khadi clothes should be regularly washed. In India, it is considered decent enough to wear a short dhoti. Indian civilization is so liberal that it is not considered the least indecent if anyone wears, as I do, a very short loin-cloth. In our country, we do not judge a man by his dress. The loin-cloth would not, however, be looked on with favour in other countries. If I had to go to a foreign land, I would by all means put away my loin-cloth in a trunk. In foreign countries, it is necessary to cover the legs up to the knee. 'Do in Rome as the Romans do' is no idle saying. Everyone would consider us guilty of lack of consideration if we unnecessarily do something that offends the susceptibility of people in foreign lands. I would regard such conduct as a form of violence. There is certainly violence in showing no consideration for others.

While discussing the letter from East Africa, I may also say how khadi could be popularized there. Ready-made dresses are imported in East and South Africa in large quantities. We may have dresses stitched here which will suit the native inhabitants of these countries and the Indians there, and carry them with us. Resourceful traders there can, with patience, sell khadi worth lakhs of rupees. India does not, however, produce enough khadi to meet her own requirements. I am not unaware of the fact that the quantity of khadi produced and sold is no more than a drop in the ocean. The use of khadi is spreading at such a slow pace still that stocks of khadi have accumulated at many places. How strange and

how sad! I made the suggestion above with this fact in mind. A single Gujarati trader in South Africa can easily lift the entire stock of khadi which has accumulated in Gujarat.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 6-4-1924

297. UNTOUCHABILITY AND UNAPPROACHABILITY

The accumulated burden of Hindus' sins is big enough. We have used Shastras, which teach selflessness, as instruments of selfishness. By casting aside the immutable principles enunciated in the Shastras and treating as of permanent application verses which prescribed rules of conduct of temporary utility, we have elevated wickedness to the place of dharma. My conscience tells me ever more emphatically every day that one such wickedness is the practice of untouchability. As if the sin of untouchability was not enough, we started another sinful practice, that of unapproachability, to add to the burden. In the South, that is, in Madras Presidency, the people are familiar with this sinful practice. But with a view to serving these people kept at a distance and atoning for their own sins, Hindu members of the Congress in Travancore have started satyagraha.[1] Travancore is a Hindu State. There this practice of forcibly keeping people at a distance exists in a cruel form. Many Gujaratis may not be even aware of the meaning of *doorata*[2]. The word is not found in the dictionary. How can it ever be found in the Shastras? *Doorata* means the untouchables keeping at a certain distance from other Hindus. Owing to the belief that the other Hindus, and mainly Brahmins, are polluted even by the shadow cast by these untouchables, the latter are obliged to walk at some yards' distance from the Brahmins and other Hindus. When passing along the same road, if they fail to do so, abuses and even blows are showered on them. There are some streets in Travancore which these poor brethren are forbidden even to enter. Pained by this unbearable evil, Hindu members of the Congress have started satyagraha, as I mentioned above. In order to establish his right to walk along a particular street, an untouchable Hindu takes with him another Hindu and enters that street. Three untouchables offer this kind of satyagraha every day and court arrest. Three of them, arrested in this way, are serving a six-month

[1] In Vykom.

[2] Literally, 'remoteness'

term of imprisonment. There is not the slightest doubt that, if this satyagraha continues peacefully and steadily, people will win.

The Hindus working to eradicate the evil of untouchability in North India have gone much further than this with the help and under the leadership of Bharat Bhushan Malaviya: the *Antyajas* draw water from wells used by other Hindus. The notion of being defiled by their touch seems to have died out in many places. Now the classes regarded as untouchables are able to make use of common wells. The Secretary of the Dohad Taluka Congress Committee reports to this effect.[1] He writes to say that the Hindus did not permit the *Antyajas* to draw water from a well belonging to the local board. A weaver who had passed the vernacular final examination made bold to use the well and persuaded other members of his community to follow him. They agreed and went to fetch water from that well. Other Hindus attempted to stop them from doing so, but the police sub-inspector refused to help them and explained to them that, when a movement was going on in the country against such restrictions, they should not try to stop the *Antyajas*. This calmed the caste Hindus. This was a happy conclusion. The incident, however, shows that, even in Gujarat, the *Antyajas* are still prevented from drawing water from public wells. I congratulate the Hindus of Dohad, but at the same time suggest to the Dohad Congress Committee members that they should visit the *Antyaja* locality and instruct the residents in sanitation and persuade them to keep their pitchers, etc., clean. If such an effort to reform them is not undertaken simultaneously, it is likely that, while things are just beginning to change for the better, opposition to *Anytajas* drawing water from public wells may be renewed. I have heard of such a development at many places in the north.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 6-4-1924

[1] This information was later found to be misleading; *vide* "A Correction", 27-4-1924.

298. LETTER TO ELIZABETH SHARPE

POST ANDHERI,
April 6, 1924

DEAR MISS SHARPE,

I thank you for your sincere and frank letter.[1]

I know you do not want me to discuss the various questions you raise in it. You have raised them for me to ponder over which I shall certainly do. I must not, however, conceal from you the fact that there is a radical difference between your viewpoint and mine. What does it matter, however, so long as we all remain searchers after truth?

Yours sincerely,

MISS E. SHARPE
SHRI KRISHNA NIVAS
LIMBDI
KATHIAWAR

From a copy: S.N. 8684

[1] In her letter of April 3, Elizabeth Sharpe had posed Gandhiji a string of questions:
" . . . Do you think you have done any good to India by raising in her heart the rankling sense of injustice, true or untrue? Do you think the impassioned speeches of Mrs. Naidu, rousing 'hate' are 'good' karma? Do you think two wrongs can ever make a right? Or that Temporal Power in India will not be the end of her spirituality? Don't you feel that it was just because of India's worldly poverty that she was spiritually rich? That man cannot serve two masters, God and Mammon? Alas! Alas! The mad energy thrown about in India today was once devoted to *Brahma-Darshan*. Even now India is the only spot in the world where in peace and quietness we may renounce the world—good God, Mr. Gandhi, there is more freedom in India today than anywhere else; freedom to wander, beg and love, and have God in our own ways. Isn't that the highest freedom? You with your true life, your immense possibilities for good, please, please care not at all for man's condition on this earth, that is past bad karma—care only for the saving of his soul—cutting off worldly bonds. I write this because you, an Indian, will understand thoroughly. The West which only believes in this one birth will not see my point at all. . . ." S.N. 8646

299. LETTER TO JOSEPH BAPTISTA

POST ANDHERI,
April 6, 1924

DEAR MR. BAPTISTA[1],

I thank you for your letter of the 5th inst.[2]

I wrote to you immediately on receiving your letter. Wednesday, like Monday, is my day of silence. You are quite correct in saying that my views are practically what they were before. At the same time, if you could find time after next Sunday, I should be delighted to give you any day between 5 and 6 p.m., except Mondays and Wednesdays.

Yours sincerely,

JOSEPH BAPTISTA, ESQ.
MATHARPACADY
MAZAGAON, BOMBAY

From a copy: S.N. 8685

300. LETTER TO GURBAKSH SINGH GULATI

POST ANDHERI,
April 6, 1924

DEAR SARDAR GURBAKSH SINGH[3],

I was glad to receive your letter of the 3rd instant and to hear about all the friends whom you left behind in the jail. I remember them all and I remember my talks with the Kaveeshar.

I thank you for your inquiry about my health. I am making very fair progress. I am able to take a little exercise daily and am gaining strength day by day.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SARDAR GURBAKSH SINGH GULATI
C/o L. AMRIT LAL SETHI
GUJRANWALA

From a photostat: S.N. 8686

[1] Nationalist leader, associated with the Home Rule Movement

[2] This is not available. In an earlier letter dated February 8, Baptista had written that he wanted to meet Gandhiji to discuss certain political matters in view especially of the former's impending visit to England.

[3] The original has 'Gushaksha Singh', evidently a typing error.

301. *LETTER TO MRS. M. G. POLAK*

POST ANDHERI,
April 6, 1924

MY DEAR MRS. POLAK[1],

I was so delighted to have from you after so many years your handwriting, your language, your thoughts just the same as they were before. Your description of Waldo makes me think that I would not recognize him if I meet him without notice. I hope he will be successful in the examination and find a naval job to suit him.

I am so sorry to hear about Mater[2] and Maud[3]. Let me hope that this will find them all in good health. I forgot to ask you about Amy, nor have you given any news about her. You may know that Andrews is still with me at this delightful retreat and that he is looking after me like a mother. Ramdas and Devdas are also here. This place has been turned into a cottage hospital. Radha, Maganlal's daughter, is here recovering from a severe attack of pleurisy. Another inmate is Vallabhbhai Patel's daughter whom you do not know. There is also Professor Kripalani's sister whom too you do not know. The fourth, though not laid up in bed, is Prabhudas, Chhaganlal's son. Radha's mother and sister are also here. So you see we are a fairly big family.

Andrews tells me that Henry has grown fairly stout. I wonder if I can recognize him if he comes to me unawares. I am looking forward to his . . . .

I am getting on as well as it is possible. Andrews takes me for a walk in the evening by the seaside.

With love to you all,

Yours,

MRS. M. G. POLAK
33, MOWBRAY ROAD
BURNSBURY
LONDON, N.W.

From a photostat: S.N. 8687

[1] Millie Graham Polak, wife of H. S. L. Polak

[2] Polak's mother

[3] Polak's sister

302. LETTER TO GEORGE JOSEPH

POST ANDHERI,
April 6, 1924

MY DEAR JOSEPH,

I am delighted you have decided to put Mrs. Joseph under Dr. Rajan's[1] care. He is a skilled physician and I am sure that she will be well looked after under his care.

It would be a splendid thing if you succeed in growing cotton in your district, and if you do not wish to import cotton from the nearest district where it is grown, I would suggest your commencing weaving and importing hand-spun yarn from wherever it is found.

As to Vykom, I think that you should let the Hindus do the work. It is they who have to purify themselves. You can help by your sympathy and by your pen, but not by organizing the movement and certainly not by offering satyagraha. If you refer to the Congress resolution of Nagpur, it calls upon the Hindu members to remove the curse of untouchability. I was surprised to learn from Mr. Andrews that the disease had infected even the Syrian Christians.

With love to yourself and Mrs. Joseph,

Yours sincerely,

SJT. GEORGE JOSEPH
KUZHUVAPPURAM
CHENGANNUR (TRAVANCORE)

From a copy: S.N. 8688

[1] Dr. T. S. S. Rajan

303. LETTER TO HARIBHAU PATHAK

POST ANDHERI,
April 6, 1924

DEAR HARIBHAU,

Here is a reminiscence from Lokamanya's conversation with me.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. HARIBHAU PATHAK
SECRETARY
CITY CONGRESS COMMITTEE
POONA

[ENCLOSURE]

I had the privilege of meeting the Lokamanya scores of times. The first time I had the honour of making his acquaintance was in 1896,[1] when I went to Poona to pay my respects to the leaders there, and to canvass their assistance in the cause of Indian settlers in South Africa, and the last was in Bombay when with Maulana Shaukat Ali I went to him at Sardar Griha before leaving Bombay with the Maulana for an Upper India tour. When we returned from the tour, it was only to hear that the Lokamanya was lying dangerously ill. I went in to pay my respects, but that was all. We had no talk. I propose to give only the last reminiscence as it is appropriate to the season. About Hindus and Mussalmans he said, turning to the Maulana: "I will sign anything that Gandhi suggests, because I have full faith in him on the question." About Non-co-operation, he significantly repeated to me what he had said to me before, "I like the programme well enough, but I have my doubts as to the country being with us in the self-denying ordinance which Non-co-operation presents to the people. I will do nothing to hinder the progress of the movement. I wish you every success, and if you gain the popular ear, you will find in me an enthusiastic supporter."

From a photostat: S.N. 8689

[1] *Vide* Vol. II, p. 136.

304. LETTER TO SIR IBRAHIM RAHIMTULLA

POST ANDHERI,
April 6, 1924

DEAR SIR IBRAHIM RAHIMTULLA,

I was looking forward to meeting you today. I am sorry that you are not able to come, and more so to find that the cause is your indisposition. I hope that you will soon be well. Tomorrow is a blank day, as I keep silence till late at night. Wednesday is another day of silence and all the other free days are filled during the week. May I tentatively fix next Sunday at 6 p.m.?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SIR IBRAHIM RAHIMTULLA
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 11402

305. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Sunday, 3.30 a.m. [On or after *April 6, 1924*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

You will know something about Radha and Kikibehn[2] from the accompanying letter. Radha has enough of mental troubles. I have talked with her a little. I shall have more talks when I get more time. All the three patients' beds are beside me in the open.

I intend to write in *Young India* about what you have written in *The Mahratta*. The position will be clearer after we meet and discuss things. On a little reflection, I feel that our real field of work is to support weavers of hand-spun yarn only.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: C.W. 5786. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] Gandhiji resumed writing for his weeklies regularly after April 3, 1924. The first Sunday following this date was April 6.

[2] Sister of J. B. Kripalani

306. TELEGRAM TO GOPALA KURUP

[BOMBAY,
On or after *April 6, 1924*][1]

[PANDIT GOPALA KURUP
TIRUVALA
TRAVANCORE]

RARELY ANYBODY ASKS PERMISSION DEDICATION.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 8680

307. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

Monday, April 7, 1924

BHAISHRI MAHADEV,

I am sending you the material as per list. Correct any errors in language, grammar, etc., which you may notice. I have had sufficient inquiries made. If you think it necessary to omit something, omit "Jail Experiences".

Do not include Andrews' interview and mine to A. P. about South Africa. I do not think this a proper way of preserving things which have already appeared [elsewhere]. A separate file of such items may be maintained, or they should be put in the relevant weekly file of *Y.I.*

Since my "Jail Experiences" have been started, I must continue them. More later on. I had said I would, if possible, write a Gujarati article on the Satyagraha Week. But now you may give in the *Navajivan* Supplement a translation of the English note [in *Young India*].

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

If, after dropping "Jail Experiences", you have still more than enough [this week], you may give the article[2] from *Unity*

[1] This was in reply to Gopala Kurup's telegram of April 5, 1924, from Travancore received on April 6, which read: "Humbly beg to dedicate my Malayalam book *Swarajya Geetha* pray blessings permission."

[2] For extracts from and Gandhiji's comments on this article, in the Chicago periodical, *vide* "What It Is Not", 10-4-1924.

next week. Make the article on Mahomed Ali the leading article. Try and keep the Notes in the order in which they are placed. You may, however, change the order if necessary.

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: S.N. 8696

308. CABLE TO DR. PRANJIVAN MEHTA

[*April 8, 1924*][1]

PRANJIVAN
RANGOON

MANILAL LEAVING AHMEDABAD TODAY.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 8692

309. LETTER TO J. P. TRIVEDI

ANDHERI,
Chaitra Sud 4 [*April 8, 1924*][2]

BHAISHRI JAYSHANKAR TRIVEDI[3],

As I was all the time thinking of writing to you, I got your letter. I feel ashamed that I did not write to you first. I only wished to tell you that I have not forgotten your love. I have seen few people in the world who do good to others in a spirit of humility, and you are one of them. I have observed this for years and felt happy.

It is good that you have been able to buy a motor-car.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: G.N. 998

[1] This was in pursuance of Manilal's telegram, dated April 7, 1924, from Bombay, which read: "Starting tomorrow Rangoon *via* Delhi. Please send some message for Indians particularly Gujaratis in Burma and Burmans care Seth Jamnalalji 128 Canning Street, Calcutta."

[2] In 1924, *Chaitra Sud* 4 fell on April 8.

[3] Professor of Agricultural Engineering at the Agricultural College, Poona

310. LETTER TO PARASRAM MEHROTRA

Chaitra Shukla 4 [April 8, 1924][1]

CHI. PARASRAM,

Your letter. I had sent a telegram[2] to the Conference[3]. Any results?

I hope your work will now be regular.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6202. Courtesy: Parasram Mehrotra

311. TELEGRAM TO K. NAMBOODRIPAD

ANDHERI,
[On or after *April 8, 1924*][4]

CONGRATULATE MENON MADHAVAN ON ARREST. HOPE FIGHT WILL BE KEPT UP TO FINISH.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 10270

312. LETTER TO FULCHAND K. SHAH

ANDHERI,
Chaitra Sud 5 [April 9, 1924]

BHAISHRI FULCHAND[5],

Bhai Chunilal has written to me a long letter about the school there. Therein he has made several allegations against you. I trust I can ask you to see him personally, know from him

[1] As given by the addressee
[2] Not available
[3] U.P. Political Conference
[4] This was in reply to the telegram from Namboodripad received on April 8, 1924, which read: "Iyer Brothers fact not correct. Campaign resumed today. Kesava Menon Madhavan offered satyagraha and were arrested. Other batches to follow daily."
[5] A constructive and political worker of Wadhwan, Kathiawar

his complaints and write to me after satisfying him. I want you to do this.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : C.W. 2875. Courtesy: Shardabehn F. Shah

313. TELEGRAM TO K. M. PANIKKAR

[On or after *April 9, 1924*][1]

MY CONGRATULATIONS ON JATHA'S PEACEFUL SURRENDER.

From a photostat: S.N. 9957

314. NOTES

THE SATYAGRAHA WEEK

The reader does not need the reminder that this is the sacred Satyagraha Week. It was on Sunday the 6th April, 1919, that the first all-India hartal took place as a protest against the passing of the Rowlatt Act. It was on that day that thousands of men and women all over India kept a twenty-four-hour fast. It was on that sacred day that the nation recognized, with the strength it has never done before, the necessity of Hindu-Muslim unity and that Hindus, Mussalmans, Sikhs, Parsis, Christians and others met in hearty co-operation, and it was on that day that an all-India swadeshi spirit, not in vengeance but as a vital necessity in the life of the nation, was born. It was on the 13th that the Jallianwala massacre took place. We have been observing both these days and the intervening days from year to year as special days for purification, searching of hearts, for cultivating better relations among all the different sections and for promoting swadeshi which has centred gradually round the spinning-wheel. I was grieved to learn from a friend that in Amritsar, the scene of the black tragedy, the Week was least observed last year. I wonder how Amritsar and the rest of India will have observed the Week this year.

[1] This was in reply to Panikkar's telegram of April 8, received on April 9, stating: "Third Jatha surrendered peacefully."

Am I Unfair?

I have the good fortune to possess friends who keep me on the right path when I am inclined or likely to stray away from it. One such friend thought that, in my letter[1] last week to the readers of *Young India*, I was less than fair to the Government of Bombay inasmuch as I declined to render thanks to them for having given me best medical assistance and made the path to recovery easy by freely permitting friends to visit me. In my friend's opinion, the treatment was a sign of change of heart due to the advent of the new Governor. I have deeply thought over my friend's argument and I am reluctantly obliged to adhere to the conclusion that I owe no thanks for the best medical assistance and the facilities given to friends to visit me, unless thanks are due to a Government every time it does its duty. I have made ample acknowledgment of the fact that the Government did for me during my illness all that it could reasonably be expected to do in respect of a prisoner. But I am unable to render thanks to the Government as such in the same sense that I have rendered them to Col. Maddock, Col. Murray and Major Jones. They need not have been as kind as they were and I would still have acknowledged that they had done all they could be expected to do in their respective spheres. The personal element was a factor in these gentlemen's conduct towards me, and I was bound to give them my thanks. To finish this part of the argument, if I may state it without indelicacy, I may say that my scrupulously correct conduct as a prisoner had not a little to do with the happy relations that subsisted between the officials and, indeed, also the Government and myself. I state this merely to emphasize the truth tested by me on scores of trying occasions that uniformly correct conduct will disarm the fiercest opposition, prejudice and suspicion.

Now for the supposed change of heart. I wish I could see it. I am longing for it. The reader may know that the slightest real change of heart will make me capitulate without delay. But it will have to be very real. The Government have failed even in so simple a test as the release of Maulana Hasrat Mohani, and the removal of the ban against Mr. Horniman. I own that from a strong believer I have become an equally strong unbeliever in this Government. I am, however, sane enough to be able to perceive a sincere change of heart. It has been suggested that Sir George Lloyd would not have treated me during my illness as His Excellency Sir Leslie Wilson has done. I do not believe it. In spite

[1] *Vide* "For the Readers Past and Present of *Young India*", 3-4-1924.

of Sir George Lloyd's utter dislike of me, he would have given me the same medical assistance and facility that were given to me by the present Governor. Indeed, it was he who sent Col. Maddock to examine me when I first became at all seriously ill in the Yeravda Jail about eight months ago. Col. Maddock was asked to visit me weekly during convalescence and send the Governor weekly reports. I have a higher opinion of the British officials than most people imagine. They have a high sense of duty. Only the honesty of an ordinary official does not travel beyond the line of policy. It is no fault of his. He is heir to a system handed down for generations—a system which is based on exploitation of the weak by the strong. The official breaks down when the system which sustains him is in jeopardy. But it is my belief that no other human being will do better under that system. The sooner, therefore, it is destroyed or radically altered the better for us all.

Deck Passengers

I invite the reader's attention to Mr. Chaturvedi's interesting and instructive experiences in East Africa.[1] His bitter experiences as a deck passenger revive painful memories. The picture he has given is not overdrawn. Three parties can change the disgraceful state of things:

(1) The British India Steam Navigation Company
(2) The Government
(3) The passengers.

The British India S.N. Company will not worry because its concern is to secure the largest profits. We may expect nothing from the Government till we have the power to move it. The passengers are the real parties affected. Unfortunately, the majority of them are inured even to avoidable hardships. The others secure relief by bribes. It is only when a sensitive passenger travels as a deck passenger that he causes a stir. He does not make reform in the treatment of deck passengers his life-work and so nothing is achieved. Only when self-respecting persons like Mr. Banarasidas insist on proper sanitation and accommodation, not merely for themselves, but for all, may substantial change be expected.

Charkha Abroad

Mr. Chaturvedi's remarks on the spinning-wheel are the most instructive. If Indians of East Africa can popularize the bow, the wheel and the loom among the natives of the soil, they

[1] Published in *Young India*, 10-4-1924

will have rendered them a signal service. The possibilities of the wheel are as wide as the world itself because its spread requires little capital. It merely needs fellow-feeling, ordinary organizing ability and technical skill which can be easily acquired.

Khaddar in East Africa

Should the Indians of East Africa wear khaddar? Shrimati Sarojini Naidu is reported to have replied in the negative. I can hardly believe it. Be that as it may, East Africa should use khaddar as far as possible. It is not necessary for them to take or be under the vow of khaddar, as we at home must be. What the Shrimati must have laid stress upon is cleanliness and neatness. Khaddar clothing must be kept spotlessly clean and worn neatly. One often notices a tendency towards neglect of these necessary qualities. If khaddar is to become popular with the upper classes, the wearers must be clean and neat. The roughness and thickness of well-washed khaddar are a recommendation rather than otherwise. The absorbent property of rough khaddar makes it hygienically sound. Its loose texture gives it a softness that is pleasant to the wearer.

As We Have Sown

Mr. Andrews's pathetic remarks[1] on untouchability deserve to be pondered over by every Hindu. I knew nothing till Mr. Andrews told me that untouchability was practised even by Syrian Christians of Malabar. As a Hindu I hung my head in shame when I heard the news. For I realized that the evil was copied by them from the Hindus. The retort of his fellow-passengers which Mr. Andrews received when he broached the subject of the disabilities of Indians in South Africa was well deserved. Whilst it is true that the Europeans in South Africa need not treat us as we treat our own people at home, our mouths are shut when our own sins are flung in our faces. We are reaping fruits of what we have sown.

My Offer

Shrimati Sarojini's splendid work in South Africa has told. Letters received by me from South Africa show that her presence has brought fresh courage to the Indian settlers. Mr. Duncan's fruitless efforts to justify an unjustifiable measure show also that the Europeans of South Africa have felt the force of her wonderful work. Mr. Duncan's assertion that the agreement of 1914 did

[1] Andrews's article, "Untouchability", was published in the same issue of *Young India*.

not bind the Union Government to take away vested rights, as the Class Areas Bill admittedly does, ought to carry with it the understanding that, if such an agreement can be proved, the Bill will not be proceeded with. Even though a non-co-operator, I beg to make the proposal that, if the Government of India receive an undertaking from the Union Government that, if the agreement can be proved to the satisfaction of an impartial tribunal, they will suspend the Bill pending such enquiry, I shall be prepared to appear before such a tribunal to prove the agreement. Nor is precedent wanting for such a course. When the interpretation of the Transvaal Law 3 of 1885 and the propriety of its enactment in spite of the London Convention[1] were in dispute, the matter was referred to arbitration by the Imperial and the Transvaal Governments.

TO CORRESPONDENTS

I have before me a heap of correspondence and other documents for publication. It is impossible for me to find space for it if *Young India* is to retain its present size. The correspondents will please, therefore, forgive me if they miss their contributions in these columns. The fact is that, as an esteemed friend remarked to me, *Young India* is not a newspaper. It is a viewspaper. And then, too, it is being used today predominantly for distributing my views and in my own way. Its scope being, therefore, circumscribed, correspondents will do well not to send contributions which have no special feature about them and which have no bearing on the message for which *Young India* stands.

Young India, 10-4-1924

315. CAMPAIGN OF MISREPRESENTATION

At the present moment there seems to be a wilful attempt being made to widen the gulf between Hindus and Mussalmans. Some newspapers, both Hindu and Muslim, are leaving no stone unturned to inflame passions and, unfortunately, they do not hesitate to resort to exaggeration and even misrepresentation. Where they are not themselves consciously guilty of such methods, they recklessly copy without verification everything in the nature of a sensation that appears in any other newspaper.

One such statement was made with reference to Maulana Mahomed Ali. He was reported to have said that an adulterous

[1] This was signed in 1884; *vide* Vol. I, p. 383.

Mussalman was better than myself. That there should have been found any person willing to believe such a thing of Maulana Mahomed Ali shows the degree of tension that exists between Hindus and Mussalmans. The reader will find in another column a translation of the two letters written by the Maulana, one to Swami Shri Shraddhanandji[1] and the other to *Tej*.[2] In my opinion, the letters dispose of, once for all, the calumny against the Maulana that has been going the round of the Press. Enemies of India's freedom have not hesitated to distort the Maulana's statement and use it for the purpose of setting the Hindus against the Maulana Saheb. I venture to commend his letters to the attention of every thoughtful Hindu. The letters, in my humble opinion, demonstrate the transparent honesty of the Maulana.

What is the original statement which has been so cruelly distorted by some newspapers? He says in effect that the creed of Islam is better than my creed. Is there anything offensive in the statement? So long as there are different religions, is not the Maulana's position the only logical and honest one? I have very dear Christian friends in South Africa and in India. They pray for light for me. One of them, a retired solicitor of standing in South Africa, urges me to accept Jesus Christ and his salvation. He says that without that all my effort will be useless. Thousands of Christians certainly hold that a righteous man without belief in Jesus Christ is less than an adulterous Christian. Does an orthodox Hindu fare better? If he does, why is there all this feverish agitation regarding *Shuddhi*? In making the choice of a husband for his daughter, will he choose the best character irrespective of religion or the best man in his own sect? And if he will restrict the choice to his own circle, does it not show that he, too, like the Maulana, believes that his creed is the best of all?

The Maulana has stated the religious law in picturesque language and feeling safe, as he had a right to do, that I could not be offended, he chose me as one of his best Hindu friends for his illustration and showed that his creed he held superior to persons, no matter how dear they might be to him. I hold that he deserves to be honoured for the staunchness of his faith rather than be accused of coldness for a friend or disrespect for the latter's creed.

[1] Munshiram Nanakchand (1856-1926); later known as Shraddhanand; nationalist leader of Arya Samaj who took a prominent part in public activities in Delhi and the Punjab.

[2] For the text of these letters, *vide* Appendix XIII.

Nor need his prayers for me that I should find it in my heart to accept Islam cause any alarm or surprise. He would not be a true friend if he did not wish the best (according to his belief) for me. My creed is truth and non-violence in their extreme form. I may be wrong. But if I wish well to my friends, I cannot but wish that they may have the same creed so long as I continue to believe it to be the best. I remain within the Hindu fold because it stands best the test laid down by my creed.

The Swamiji in his note, whilst heartily and unreservedly accepting the Maulana's letter, remarked that his creed made no difference between practice and profession as the Maulana's appeared to him to do. The second letter of the Maulana clears up the point and clinches the whole argument when he says that his creed, too, does not divorce practice from profession. He adds that in his letter he merely compared the world's creeds and gave his opinion that his was the best. Could he do otherwise and still be a Mussalman? If he thought otherwise, would he not then, as an honest man, be bound to profess the creed he considered better than that of Islam?

I hope that the heart of every true Hindu will go out to Mahomed Ali when, in the midst of his domestic bereavement and the sickness of his great brother, he is trying his utmost to heal the breach between the Hindus and the Mussalmans. Surely Hindus who strive for unity have enough fanaticism within to recognize that Mussalman co-workers fare no better.

The other incident is reported to have occurred in the Tibbia College. I asked my son to write to Dr. Ansari to let me know what actually did happen. I quote his reply in full except six words which give the name of the newspaper which has been offending against the law of self-restraint and verification. I omit the name because the purpose is not to select newspapers for criticism, but to find a remedy for the disease that has become rampant in the Press. Dr. Ansari writes:

> The incident in the Tibbia College is a very petty one. On the day of the celebration of Mahatmaji's birthday in the Tibbia College, one of the speakers compared him to Jesus Christ to which a Muslim student took exception and observed that no living person, however eminent in all respects, should be compared to prophets. Some of the students protested against the Muslim student's remark upon which the latter tried to explain what he had meant and regretted that he was misunderstood. This is the whole story and it is evidently absurd to suggest that members of the staff were involved in it or that there was the slightest likelihood of a breach of peace.

The papers which you mention are extremely partisan ones whose characteristic feature it is to purvey news calculated to set one community against the other and to present trifling incidents in a very highly exaggerated form. It would not have been so very sad if these papers alone were to blame, because they are neither important nor well known. But the misfortune is that the spirit of animosity is swaying almost all the vernacular papers—Hindu and Muslim—in Northern India.

Nor are the incidents referred to by you the only ones reporting which these papers have betrayed such a deplorable and narrow-minded bigotry. Blind fanaticism and a reprehensible desire to run the other community down by every means has today become an essential part of the life of a vernacular paper of Northern India.

The newspaper readers know the exaggerated manner in which the incident has been described. The Muslim student who took exception to the comparison was, after all, justified in so doing. It is not necessary for the purpose of honouring a man to compare him with any other honoured man, much less with revered prophets. The information Dr. Ansari gives about the vernacular Press in Northern India is calculated to cause alarm and anxiety. It is to be hoped that the papers which make a living out of sensations will put patriotism and truth before their pockets. I have heard it suggested that Muslim editors say they will cease to revile Hindus and Hinduism when the Hindu editors leave off reviling Islam and Mussalmans. Hindu editors want to reverse the process. I suggest that both make the desired improvement simultaneously.

I do not wish to suggest that truth should be hushed. There has been that kind of indelicate delicacy before now. What is necessary, however, is that whilst truth may be fearlessly told, exaggeration and innuendos should be scrupulously avoided.

Young India, 10-4-1924

316. MAULANA MAHOMED ALI ON HIS CRITICS

The following are the letters addressed by Maulana Mahomed Ali, the one to Swami Shri Shraddhanandji and the other to the Editor, *Tej*, Delhi.[1] The letters are referred to in the leading article.[2]

Young India, 10-4-1924

[1] *Vide* Appendix XIII.

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

317. *WHAT IT IS NOT*

The situation in India illustrates another curious basis of difference between us. I hold to the "Non-resistance" idea. Gandhi as I understand him proclaims the Way of Love. And yet he does not see that "Non-co-operation is a way of violence". Suppose the milk drivers of New York had a real and just and even terrible grievance. Suppose that they should strike and cut off the milk supply from the babies of New York. They might never raise a hand in violent attack on anyone and yet their way would be the way of violence. Over the dead bodies of little children, they would by "non-co-operation" win their victory. As Bertrand Russell said of the Bolsheviki, "such suffering makes us question the means used to arrive at a desired end". Non-co-operation means suffering in Lancashire and is an appeal, in the end, to violence rather than reason.

This is not quite to the point and yet it does illustrate in a way what I have in mind. The advocates of Home Rule in India are now in the legislative bodies and there they propose to block progress by non-co-operative methods. In England, the country in which by historical accident civil institutions got a chance to develop, as John Fiske pointed out, through absence of war, the process of growth has been by the method of co-operation.

The above is an extract from an article in *Unity* (14th February, 1924) sent by an unknown American friend.

The article is a letter addressed to Mr. Holmes[1] by Mr. Arthur L. Weatherly. The letter is an endeavour to show that an idealist, if he will be practical, has to water his ideal down to suit given circumstances. The writer has packed his letter with illustrations in support of his argument. As I am not for the moment concerned with his main argument, I hope I am doing no violence to him by merely giving an extract from his letter. My purpose is to show that Mr. Weatherly's view of Indian non-co-operation cannot fail to be of general interest to the reader.[2]

Mr. Weatherly has laid down a universal proposition that "non-co-operation is a way of violence". A moment's thought would have shown the falsity of the proposition. I non-co-operate

[1] Presumably, John Haynes Holmes, author of *My Gandhi*

[2] There is an error here. Gandhiji later corrected this to read: "My purpose is to show that Mr. Weatherly's view is altogether wrong. His view, wrong though it is, cannot fail to be of general interest." *Vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", after 10-4-1924.

when I refuse to sell liquor in a liquor-shop, or help a murderer in his plans. My non-co-operation, I hold, is not only not a way of violence, but may be an act of love, if love is the motive that has prompted my refusal. The fact is that all non-co-operation is not violent and non-violent non-co-operation can never be an act of violence. It may not be always an act of love. For love is an active quality which cannot always be inferred from the act itself. A surgeon may perform a most successful operation and yet he may have no love for his patient.

Mr. Weatherly's illustration is most unhappy and incomplete for the purpose of examination. If the milk drivers of New York have a grievance against its Municipality for criminal mismanagement of its trust and if, in order to bend it, they decided to cut off the milk supply of the babies of New York, they would be guilty of a crime against humanity. But suppose that the milk drivers were underpaid by their employers, that they were consequently starving, they would be justified, if they have tried every other available and proper method of securing better wages, in refusing to drive the milk carts even though their action resulted in the death of the babies of New York. Their refusal will certainly not be an act of violence, though it will not be an act of love. They were not philanthropists. They were driving milk carts for the sake of their maintenance. It was no part of their duty as employees under every circumstance to supply milk to babies. There is no violence when there is no infraction of duty. Suppose further that the milk drivers in question knew that their employers supplied cheap but adulterated milk and another dairy company supplied better but dearer milk and they felt for the welfare of the babies of New York, their refusal to drive the milk carts will be an act of love, even though some short-sighted mother of New York might be deprived of the adulterated milk and may not have bought better but dearer milk from the more honest dairy company whose existence has been assumed for the purpose of our argument.

From the imaginary heartless milk drivers and the heaps of dead bodies of New York babies, the writer in *Unity* takes us to Lancashire and pictures its ruin when Indian non-co-operation has succeeded. In his haste to prove his main argument, the writer has hardly taken the trouble to study even simple facts. Indian non-co-operation is not designed to injure Lancashire or any other part of the British Isles. It has been undertaken to vindicate India's right to administer her own affairs. Lancashire's trade with India was established at the point of the bayonet and it is

sustained by similar means. It has ruined the one vital cottage industry which supplemented the resources of millions of India's peasants and kept starvation from their doors. If India now strives to revive her cottage industry and hand-spinning and refuses to buy any foreign cloth or even cloth manufactured by Indian mills, and Lancashire or Indian mills suffer thereby, non-co-operation cannot by any law of morals be held to be an act of violence. India never bound herself to maintain Lancashire. Visitors to taverns or houses of ill fame would be congratulated on their self-restraint and would be held even as benefactors of keepers of taverns or questionable houses, if they ceased to visit those places even without notice and even if their abstention resulted in the starvation of the keepers of those houses. Similarly, if customers of money-lenders ceased to borrow and the latter starved, the former cannot be regarded as violent by reason of their withdrawal. But they might be so considered if they transferred their custom from one money-lender to another through ill will or spite and without just cause.

Thus, it is clear that non-co-operation is not violence when the refusal of the restraint is a right and a duty, even though by reason of its performance some people may have to suffer. It will be an act of love when non-co-operation is resorted to solely for the good of the wrongdoer. Indian non-co-operation is a right and a duty, but cannot be regarded as an act of love because it has been undertaken by a weak people in self-defence.

Mr. Weatherly's reference to the obstructive programme of the Swarajists cannot for reasons stated last week be examined for the time being.

Young India, 10-4-1924

318. SAROJINI'S MAGNETISM

Just at the time of sending the last post for *Young India*, I received a letter from my son[1] who is in charge of *Indian Opinion*, Natal, giving a graphic account of Mrs. Naidu's visit. I know that the reader will like to have it at the earliest opportunity. I give below a translation of the letter which is dated 15th March 1924 :

> This is a hurried note. I have barely two hours to catch the mail.
>
> Mrs. Sarojini Naidu has been in our midst for the past twenty days. Her work by now has produced a very good effect on the people of this

[1] Manilal Gandhi

country, particularly the Europeans. Johannesburg was hostile when she came, but her eloquence has disarmed much of the opposition and the mischief-makers have been shamed into silence. Towards the end of her tour in the Transvaal, Europeans attended her lectures in their thousands. I was not at Johannesburg myself. But I managed to meet her at Volksrust, half-way between Johannesburg and here. She was received at every station by large and eager crowds, composed of both Europeans and Indians and her compartment presented the constant appearance of a flower garden. She stopped for two days in Maritzburg. The anti-Asiatic spirit there is acute and the reactionary element holds full sway. There had been a strong movement to disallow the use of the Town Hall to the Indians for Mrs. Naidu's reception and serious consequences were threatened if it was allowed. But the situation was saved at the last moment by the *Maritzburg Times* which, in a leading article, wisely dissuaded the Europeans from any precipitate action. In spite of the indications of trouble, every inch of the Town Hall was packed with Indians and quite a number of Europeans occupied the gallery. The Mayor having refused to preside on the occasion, a European friend was proposed in the chair. He was howled down by the occupants of the gallery as soon as he attempted to speak. Mr. Bhagat, who tried to reason, too, was obliged to sit down. Mrs. Naidu at this stage took charge of the meeting. She had hardly uttered three sentences when the gallery-leaders were seen quitting the hall one after another and, in about twenty minutes' time, the main element of rowdies had retired from the field. When the meeting was over, a number of Europeans, unknown before, showed great eagerness to shake hands with Mrs. Naidu.

The next day, crowds of Indians and Europeans could be seen in front of Mrs. Naidu's residence struggling to have a glimpse of her, the space outside being hardly sufficient to contain them. The European and Coloured women felt astounded at her courage. There were missionaries who called on Mrs. Naidu, wanting to make her acquaintance, and the whole dramatic change was quickly followed by a cordial interview between the Bishop of Natal and Mrs. Naidu.

Durban probably excelled all the other places in the reception it gave to the great guest. A special train received her at Maritzburg. The station platform at Durban was packed to overflowing and the road outside, too, was blocked by the mass of spectators. Mrs. Naidu was conveyed to the Albert Park in a carriage drawn by the people themselves. The attendance at the meeting here was easily five thousand men and women of all classes and as many schoolchildren. The women's meeting was unique in the history of South Africa. Mrs. Naidu also delivered two lectures in the Town Hall which was filled to the full on both occasions, some of the people actually having to return disappointed for want of

accommodation. The European women had arranged a special meeting of their own to receive Mrs. Naidu. The tour here has now extended up to Zululand. Tongaat and Phœnix yet remain to be done. Mrs. Naidu has for the present left for Cape Town after spending three days here. She intends being present at the debate on the Class Areas Bill. She then tours through some of the towns in the Cape, goes back to Johannesburg on a brief visit, comes back here to spend with us a week and takes the first available boat in April for the Motherland.

Mrs. Naidu's energy is wonderful. She has slight fever and headache at times, but her ailments never come in the way of her heavy programme of journeys and lectures.

The authorities have accorded her excellent treatment. She is invariably given a special saloon on trains and the railway officials are courteous. Mrs. Naidu was anxious to write to you, but it has been quite impossible for her to do so. She has asked me specially to write to you.

Young India, 10-4-1924

319. LETTER TO ISMAIL AHMED

POST ANDHERI,
April 10, 1924

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter, for which I thank you. I hope to make such use of it as I can in the columns of *Young India*.

I should hope that God will show me the light and the strength to follow it. I am afraid I am beyond redemption if you think that the Bardoli decision was a blunder. I am quite likely to repeat such blunders if I am to retain my loyalty to truth undiminished.

Yours sincerely,

ISMAIL AHMED, ESQ.
KHOLVAD
SURAT

From a copy : S.N. 8701

320. LETTER TO K. M. PANIKKAR

POST ANDHERI,
April 10, 1924

MY DEAR PANIKKAR,

You are keeping me well posted with all the news. I want to go slowly. I have your telegram saying that the Jatha peacefully surrendered. I know that victory lies in that direction and no other.

I understand what you say about the Vykom temple. You will have seen that my letter[1] was totally non-committal, but since then things have moved fast, and I have kept pace with them. I agree with you that it is a most important movement that has been launched in Travancore. I can only hope that there are enough volunteers to fight the struggle to the finish.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. M. PANIKKAR
AKALI SAHAYAK BUREAU
AMRITSAR

From a copy : S.N. 8703

321. LETTER TO MAHOMED ALI

POST ANDHERI,
April 10, 1924

MY DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER,

I have your two letters, one written by your secretary enclosing a letter received by you, the other personal.

I am dealing with the enclosure in my own way. You may come when you think that you can leave safely the bedside of the big patient.[2]

I have sent you my assurance and give it to you again that I am not going to publish anything of my views on the two questions till I have met you. You may take your own time. You

[1] The reference apparently is to "Letter to K. P. Kesava Menon", 1-4-1924, which was published in *The Hindu*, 3-4-1924.

[2] Shaukat Ali was ailing and had suffered a relapse. Gandhiji had a letter dated April 6 from Zahir Ali, Shaukat Ali's son, stating that Mahomed Ali was unable to leave for Bombay to meet Gandhiji till his brother was better.

will see how I have dealt with your letter to Swamiji in the columns of *Young India*.[1]

I do not need the slightest persuasion in favour of the proposition that both the parties are to blame for the present tension, and when the time comes, I am hoping and praying that God will give me the strength and courage to say the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth as I know it.

I do not know what Devdas wrote to Dr. Ansari, but the poor boy tells me that there was not a word that could have disconcerted either you or Dr. Ansari. I thought you wanted him to post the extracts so that I could know the real state of affairs in order to enable me to deal with those extracts.

I have just received a reassuring wire from Dr. Ansari saying that Shaukat Ali's temperature is again normal.

With love,

Yours sincerely,

MAULANA MAHOMED ALI
C/O DR. M. A. ANSARI
1, DARYAGANJ
DELHI

From a photostat : S.N. 8704

322. TO THE READER

JUHU,
Chaitra Shukla 6 [April 10, 1924]

DEAR READER,

Attempts are being made in many newspapers in North India to create feelings of disaffection between Hindus and Muslims. One notices manifestations of jealousy, exaggeration and lies in these newspapers. At such a time your duty and mine is to try our best to put out this fire. It is my firm conviction that there is no cause for disunity and cleavage between us. Each adhering to his own religion, we can maintain mutual brotherliness. I therefore hope that you will try to promote friendship between our two communities. Never accept without examination and scrutiny all

[1] *Vide* "Campaign of Misrepresentation" and "Maulana Mahomed Ali on His Critics", 10-4-1924.

that may be written against either Hindus or Muslims.

Yours,
MOHANDAS GANDHI

[From Hindi]
Hindi Navajivan, 13-4-1924

323. *LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI*

[After *April 10, 1924*][1]

BHAISHRI MAHADEV,

I send herewith matter for *Young India*. Some is already lying with you. Do not hesitate to correct mistakes wherever you notice any.

The following sentence in the current issue is incorrect: "My purpose is to show that Mr. Weatherly's view of Indian non-co-operation cannot fail to be of general interest." This sentence makes no sense. It should be, "My purpose . . . Mr. W's view is altogether wrong. His view, wrong though it is, cannot fail to be of general interest." The second sentence, indeed, may well be omitted. It is quite unnecessary. But since you have spoken of "general interest", I have retained the phrase to show how you can revise such sentences which seem to make no sense. Though, indeed, care has been taken here, I see that mistakes remain. I would even suggest that you should keep a corrected file of *Young India* so that, if Ganesan[2] or some one else reprints the articles, the correct text may be printed.

We need not at all feel concerned if the sales of *N.J.* and *Y.I.* do not increase. Nobody has taken note of Rs. 50,000/-[3] as everyone has become nervous. Should not something be said about the example being followed? How is this to be done? We have never heard of any newspapers having been run on the same lines as ours. You may not therefore be sorry for the absence of the note.

Blessings from
BAPU

[1] The sentence quoted in the second paragraph appeared in *Young India*, 10-4-1924; *vide* "What It Is Not", p. 405.

[2] S. Ganesan published two volumes of Gandhiji's articles from *Young India*, 1919-22 and 1922-24.

[3] The amount represented savings in the course of five years of the existence of *Navajivan*; *vide* "To Readers of *Navajivan*", 6-4-1924.

[PS.] Ramdas is doing well.

'The Maulana's resignation from the Presidentship' and 'Was I Partial?' are not to my liking. If you too do not approve of them, you may destroy the articles. There is enough material even without these.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11420

324. *THOUGHTS ON COUNCIL-ENTRY*[1]

[Before *April 11, 1924*]

Pandit Motilalji and I have had prolonged discussions about propriety of non-co-operators entering the Legislative bodies. I had too the privilege of discussion with other Swarajist friends. But in spite of all my effort I have not been able to discover a common meeting ground in terms of non-co-operation. I retain the opinion that Council-entry is inconsistent with non-co-operation. There is an honest and fundamental difference between the Swarajists and myself. I have failed to convince them that to be out of the Legislative bodies is, to say the least, far more advantageous to the country than to be in them. But I recognize that so long as they think otherwise, their place is undoubtedly in the Councils. It is the best for us all. If their work prospers and the country benefits, such an ocular demonstration cannot but convince honest sceptics like me of our error and I know the Swarajists to be patriotic enough to retrace their steps when experience disillusioned them. I would therefore be no party to putting any obstacle in their way. I cannot actively help in a project in which I do not believe.

I differ too as to the method of work in the Councils. I do not believe in obstruction within the Councils. I should only enter a Legislative body, if I found I could at all use it to advantage. If therefore I entered the Councils, I should endeavour to give strength to the constructive programme of the Congress. I should

[1] The document is in Gandhiji's handwriting, with several corrections by him. It carries what are evidently his first thoughts on the "vexed question of entry by Congressmen into the Legislative Councils and Assembly" After week-long discussions, from March 29 to April 5, in Bombay, with Motilal Nehru, Lajpat Rai and other Swarajist leaders, Gandhiji formulated his stand on the question. It is likely that Gandhiji put down these thoughts sometime prior to his "Draft Statement on Council-entry," dated April 11; *vide* the following item.

therefore move resolutions requiring the Central and the Provincial Governments (1) to make all their cloth purchases in hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar, (2) to impose a prohibitive duty on foreign cloth, (3) abolish the drink and drug reserve and correspondingly reduce the army expenditure. If the Government refuse to enforce resolutions carried in the legislatures, I should invite them to dissolve them and take the vote of the electors on the specific points. If the Government will not dissolve, I should resign and prepare the country for civil disobedience. When that stage is reached, the Swarajists will find me ready to work with and under them. My test of fitness for civil disobedience remains the same as before.

During the state of probation I should advise the No-changers to prove their faith without thinking of what the Swarajists are doing or saying, prosecute their programme with undivided energy and concentration. The khaddar and the national schools are enough to occupy a large army of workers who believe in quiet, honest undemonstrative work. The Hindu and Muslim problem too will tax the best energy and faith of the workers. As Vaikom is showing, the Hindus have in untouchability a huge problem before them. In all such work outside the Councils, No-changers and pro-changers can work in unison.

From a photostat : S.N. 8718

325. DRAFT STATEMENT ON COUNCIL-ENTRY[1]

April 11, 1924

After having discussed with the Swarajist friends the vexed question of entry into the Legislative Assembly and the Councils by Congressmen, I am sorry to have to say that I have not been able to see eye to eye with the Swarajist friends. I assure the reader there has been no lack of willingness or effort on my part to accept the Swarajists' position. My task would be much simpler if

[1] This typewritten document is evidently an elaboration of his "Thoughts on Council-entry". It carried the title "First Draft of Statement on the Councils Question" and the words : "Very rough incomplete draft, unrevised. Confidential—not for publication." Gandhiji forwarded this draft to Motilal Nehru on April 13; *vide* p. 436. The latter sent Gandhiji an elaborate note; *vide* Appendix XIV. In this, he critically analysed the contents of Gandhiji's draft and offered his own suggestions. Gandhiji then prepared a final draft which, with a few minor verbal changes, was issued as a statement to the Press on May 22. *Vide* Vol. XXIV.

I would identify myself with the Swarajists' programme. It can be no pleasure to me to oppose even in thought the most valued and tried leaders, some of whom have made great sacrifices in the cause of the country and who yield to no one in their love for the freedom of the Motherland. But, in spite of my effort and willingness, I have failed to be convinced by their argument, nor is the difference between them and myself one of mere detail. Unfortunately, it goes to the rock-bottom of the principle. Had it been one of detail only, I would immediately have sacrificed my conviction, however strong it might be, and, for the sake of agreement, would have joined the Swaraj Party and advised the No-changers to heartily co-operate with the Swaraj Party and make theirs the national programme. Such an attitude is, however, impossible, the difference being, as I have said, fundamental. It is my conviction—and further thought and observation are making it daily stronger—that the entry into the Legislative bodies has retarded the progress towards Swaraj for the following reasons. In my humble opinion:

(a) The entry into the Legislative bodies is tantamount to taking part, directly or indirectly, in the present system of government, for the Legislative bodies are a chief part of the machinery designed to sustain that system.

(b) The programme of obstruction has a strong smell of violence about it and cannot generate an atmosphere of calmness which is so necessary for preparing the ground for civil disobedience, which the Congress has found to be the only sanction for which the people of India can be made ready and which is regarded as an effective substitute for armed rebellion.

(c) It has retarded the progress of the constructive programme, namely, the charkha, unity between the different communities, removal of untouchability, development of the Panchayat system, National Schools and the collection of subscriptions necessary for carrying on the programme.

(d) Assuming that the entry was desirable, it was premature. It will be admitted that the discipline that the Swaraj Party has shown in the Legislative bodies is due to the intensive and methodical work that the Congress has carried on since 1920. But neither discipline nor methodical work in the face of disappointments has become a habit with Congress workers. The experience of the past four years shows that the habit of discipline and application is likely to vanish under prolonged strain. The present Legislative bodies do not contain an atmosphere disposing one to truthfulness and non-violence. On the contrary, there is in that atmosphere

a constant, almost irresistible, temptation to depart from them.

(e) The entry is tantamount to abandoning the Khilafat and the Punjab causes.

I do not wish to enter into detailed argument in support of the objections above set forth. I would say a word only on the fundamental objection, namely, that the entry is tantamount to participation in violence. It has been suggested that nobody takes the extreme view of non-violence that I do and that most Congressmen confine the definition of non-violence to mere abstention from causing physical hurt to the opponent. I venture to doubt the accuracy of the statement, but if it is so, it is an argument, not against the fundamental difference I have stated, but for revising the Congress creed and removing the adjective "non-violent" wherever it occurs in the Congress resolutions, for it must be plain to everybody that, if a non-co-operator, whilst he refrains from causing physical hurt to his opponent, may wound him with his tongue and in his thought wish him ill, the struggle must break down. Non-violence is a mere camouflage and the atmosphere for civil disobedience can never be created, for we will always be giving tacit approval to every violent demonstration against the administrators and co-operators. It was in vindication of the view that I have set forth that civil disobedience was suspended during the Rowlatt Act agitation after the incendiarism and murders in Amritsar, Viramgam and Ahmedabad, and during the non-co-operation campaign after the mob violence in Bombay and again in Chauri Chaura. Each time the advice I tendered for suspension of civil disobedience was accepted by the nation and, if it was an honest acceptance, I was justified in thinking that non-violence in its full sense, but restricted as to the cause for which it was taken, was understood and accepted by the nation.[1]

Such being my view of the Council-entry, it follows that, if I could persuade the Swarajists, I would have them retrace their steps and give up the Assembly and the Councils. But if they have failed to convince me of the soundness of the step they have taken, I have fared no better with them. On the contrary, they can show, and with justice, brilliant victories: my release, an ocular demonstration of khaddar in the highest places, almost complete success of obstruction, namely, forcing the Government to resort to certification, which success would have been complete if the Congress had given unstinted support to the Council-entry at Gaya, thus

[1] In the final draft of the statement, this examination of the issue of non-violence does not find a place.

enabling the Swaraj Party to organize so effectively as to prevent a single election from going in favour of non-Swarajists. Naturally, it is vain for me to argue that all such things could have been done even before non-co-operation. If our aim was to get releases of prisoners, we could have got not merely a Gandhi released but many Hasrat Mohanis and all Punjab prisoners. It is idle for me to argue that there is not much in the khaddar demonstration or in keeping so many Moderates out. The machinery of the Government goes unchecked with or without the Moderates and in spite of obstruction. Nor is it much use arguing that all that the entry into the Councils is likely to achieve could have been achieved by fairly-directed agitation even in 1920. It is highly likely that, whilst the Government may not make the admission, some pleasant[1] advance upon the Reforms will be made, but I have no doubt that everything that is likely to be granted will be far short of what the Congress programme was and is designed for.[2]

It was not to be expected that the Swarajists could be convinced by any argument. They are many of them amongst the ablest, most experienced and honest patriots. They have not entered the Legislative bodies in the teeth of opposition without full deliberation, and they must not be expected to retire from the position until experience has convinced them of the futility of their programme. The question, therefore, before the country is not an examination and distribution[3] of merits of the Swarajists' views and mine. The question is: regarding the Council-entry as a settled fact, what is to be done now. Are the No-changers to keep up if only mental hostility against the Swarajists' programme, or are they to remain neutral and even help wherever it is possible and consistent with their principles? The Delhi and Cocanada resolutions have permitted those Congressmen who have no conscientious scruples to enter the Councils and the Assembly if they wish to. In my opinion, the Swarajists are, therefore, justified in entering the Legislative bodies and expecting perfect neutrality on the part of the No-changers. They were also justified in resorting to obstruction, because such was their policy and the Congress had laid down no conditions as to their entry.

So far as I am concerned, being an out-and-out believer in non-violence, my position remains the same as at Amritsar in 1919. I do not believe in obstruction in any shape or form within the

[1] Perhaps a slip for 'present'.

[2] This comparison of the relative impacts of the Non-co-operation and Swarajists' programmes is omitted in the final draft.

[3] Perhaps a slip for 'discussion'.

Councils. It appears to me to be an utter waste of time. I would enter the Councils only if I believed that I could make use of them for the advancement of the country. I must, therefore, have faith in the machinery and those in charge of it. I cannot be part of the machinery and still want to destroy it.

Taking the Council-entry, therefore, as a necessary evil, if I were a member of any of these bodies, I should carry out the constructive programme of the Congress. Two things can be immediately done : a resolution requiring the Central Government and the Provincial Governments in future to buy only hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar for all the departments under them, and another resolution abolishing the whole of the revenue from drinks and drugs, the deficit to be covered by a corresponding reduction in the army expenditure. The Government is likely even to disregard these resolutions. I am unable to say what should be done if the Government refuses to give effect to such resolutions. The fact is, not possessing the Council mentality, it is difficult for me to say anything further.

From a photostat : S.N. 8713

326. *LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI*

Friday [*April 11, 1924*][1]

BHAISHRI MAHADEV,

Golikere bungled first. I bungled next and, if you will have it so, after me—you. It seems you always think that in every matter I see your fault. I had asked Golikere to write the postcard in his own name. He thought that he was to write in mine and I was to sign it. When I saw that he thought that I would write to you in English without any particular reason and so typed a postcard and went home and when I saw the letter for signature, I did sign it, no doubt, but remarked, 'This is bungling'. I thought that you would catch the humour underlying the remark. I then remembered your letter referring to the 'Kingdom of Heaven'. There was space enough in the card for giving its meaning and so I wrote it down. It had nothing to do with the contents of the card. I had not read your Gujarati translation at all. I wrote with only your letter in mind. I have still not read your translation. Does this explain everything? The first bungling was on the

[1] *Vide* footnote 2 to "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 4-4-1924.

part of Golikere; then, on my part; then, since what I wrote was misunderstood by you, if you care to believe it, on your part, for you did not catch my meaning and misinterpreted my remark. Your interpretation of the 'Kingdom of Heaven' as distinguished from the 'Kingdom of Earth' was, I think, quite correct. However, as I have not gone through the thing carefully, I cannot say definitely. I cannot enter into a discussion about *moksha*, etc., just now.

I have put down my views up to date about Council-entry; a copy of it is sent herewith.[1] Please share it with Vallabhbhai also. Let Kaka and others also read it. You may then express your views if you feel like doing so.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 8725

327. TELEGRAM TO GEORGE JOSEPH

[ANDHERI,
April 11, 1924][2]

GEORGE JOSEPH
COCHIN

OMIT FASTING BUT STAND OR SQUAT IN RELAYS WITH QUIET SUBMISSION TILL ARRESTED.

GANDHI

From a copy: C.W. 5174. Courtesy: Krishnadas

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

[2] This was in reply to a telegram from George Joseph dated April 11, reading as follows : 'Vaikom satyagraha assumed new phase. Police preventing access. Refuses to arrest. Satyagrahis have got down front road fasting. More satyagrahis intend following daily. Advise if change procedure necessary. Urgent."

328. LETTER TO GEORGE JOSEPH

4-30 a.m., Saturday, April 12, 1924

MY DEAR JOSEPH,

The above is the wire[1] sent to you in reply to yours. Fasting in satyagraha has well-defined limits. You cannot fast against a tyrant, for it will be as a piece of violence done to him. You invite penalty from him for disobedience of his orders, but you cannot inflict on yourself penalties when he refuses to punish and renders it impossible for you to disobey his orders so as to compel infliction of penalty. Fasting can only be resorted to against a lover, not to extort rights but to reform him, as when a son fasts for a parent who drinks. My fast at Bombay, and then at Bardoli, was of that character. I fasted to reform those who loved me. But I will not fast to reform, say, General Dyer who not only does not love me, but who regards himself as my enemy. Am I quite clear?

How is Mrs. Joseph?

You must be patient. You are in an Indian State. Therefore, you may wait in deputation on the Dewan and the Maharaja. Get up a monster petition by the orthodox Hindus who may be well-disposed towards the movement. See also those who are opposing. You can support the gentle, direct action in a variety of ways. You have already drawn public attention to the matter by preliminary satyagraha. Above all, see to it that it neither dies nor by impatience becomes violent.

Yours,
BAPU

From a copy: C.W. 5174. Courtesy: Krishnadas

[1] Vide the preceding item. The telegram and this letter were released to the Associated Press of India the following day.

329. LETTER TO DR. CHOITHRAM GIDWANI

POST ANDHERI,
April 12, 1924

DEAR DR. CHOITHRAM,

I have your long telegram. I have not sent you a telegraphic reply. Your wire makes me sad, but not despondent, along my own lines. Every one of us has to be proved to the uttermost. I hope that you will be able to stand the test. Please keep me informed of the events there. Does your telegram mean that you have now regained your health? I am anxiously awaiting reply to my letter to Jairamdas.[1]

Yours sincerely,

DR. CHOITHRAM GIDWANI
HYDERABAD (SIND)

From a copy : S.N. 8720

330. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

POST ANDHERI,
April 12, 1924

MY DEAR RAJAGOPALACHARI,

Here is a copy of my letter[2] to the Secretaries of the Kerala Provincial Conference.

I sent you yesterday a copy of the draft[3] about Council-entry which I have prepared. I have not revised it, nor is it the final, even so far as the matter is concerned. It is prepared in order to enable the Swarajist friends to understand where I stand today.

Do try to attend the Working Committee and therefore come earlier if it is at all possible.

Yours sincerely,

Encl.
SJT. C. RAJAGOPALACHARI
EXTENSION
SALEM

From a photostat : S.N. 8721

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Jairamdas Doulatram", 4-4-1924.

[2] This is not available.

[3] *Vide* "Draft Statement on Council-entry", 11-4-1924.

331. *LETTER TO ELIZABETH SHARPE*

POST ANDHERI,
April 12, 1924

DEAR FRIEND,

It was good of you to have taken the trouble to write that long letter[1]. I wish the problem was so simple as you state it. It is terribly concrete for me. If I have a duty at all towards fellow-creatures, I must think what it is in the face of those who are simply skin and bone. Is there such a thing as the quality of mercy and pity and love, and if there is, am I to say these men and women who are dying of slow starvation and who are almost naked, are, after all, reaping the fruit of their past karma and I have no duty by them? Each for his own is the message for man. As I write these words in cold blood, I feel staggered, and if such was the implication of the law of karma, I should become a rebel against it. Fortunately it teaches me a different lesson. On the one hand it insists on patience, and on the other it peremptorily commands me to undo the past by rearranging the present. Believe me, those politicians whom you are pleased to call vile are not so vile as you think. You are young, as you say. I admire your enthusiasm in this cause of spirituality. May I then, as an old man, tell you that spirituality rejects the doctrine of acquiescence in evil? The spirituality of India is made of much sterner stuff than you imagine it is. I would ask you to pause and think.

Your sincere friend,

MISS ELIZABETH SHARPE
SHRI KRISHNA NIVAS
LIMBDI (KATHIAWAR)

From a photostat : S.N. 8722

[1] This is not available.

332. *MY NOTES*

Another Misunderstanding

I have cleared in an editorial the misunderstanding about Maulana Mahomed Ali. Another misunderstanding of the same type has occurred in Hakim Ajmal Khan's Tibbia College. When my release was being celebrated there, a Hindu student compared me with Jesus Christ. When another student hinted that it was not proper to compare an ordinary man with great prophets, the former felt hurt as he took the hint to be an insult to me. Thereupon, the student who had spoken against the comparison explained his standpoint and apologized. Some journalist made a mountain out of this molehill.

I happened to read a news paragraph just when I started writing these notes. Two persons were taking tea in Calcutta. One of them praised me, the other criticized me. My admirer did not like the criticism, so he fell out with the critic. The two heroes then faced each other pugnaciously. Finally, the police had to intervene and separate the violent contestants.

To whom shall I offer the bouquet? To the admirer, to the detractor, to both or to neither of them? It is easy to answer this. The admirer really blackened me by hitting the critic. It is me that he has hit. Had the critic given me two lashes of the whip, I would have immediately forgiven him in accordance with my religion of non-violence. Possibly, I would have even kissed his whip had I the strength to do so. One who has read *Chaurasi Vaishnavoni Varta*[1] should not see anything surprising in this. By striking the critic my admirer has dealt me a severer lash than that of the whip. The non-violence which I practise now cannot go, at least today, to the length of forgiving him. If my admirer meets me, he will certainly have to bear my displeasure and anger. The critic said what he believed. But my admirer did not act up to his belief. In the language of Swamiji and the Maulana, my admirer can be said to have only censured the tenets of his own religion and, howsoever good may be the principle of his religion, his conduct was worse than his critic's.

My bouquet will surely stay with me. I shall certainly not hand it over to my admirer. And since my critic belongs to the opposite camp, how can there be any bouquet for him in the present

[1] A Gujarati book containing stories of eighty-four devotees of Vishnu

atmosphere? But if the atmosphere changes and if I must offer the bouquet to one of them, I shall offer it to my critic and go off to the Himalayas.

Tolerance is the prime quality of a Swarajist. As long as this world endures, views are bound to differ from individual to individual. Swaraj will be shared, in common, by men holding different views. If we start cutting off the heads of all people who have necks too long or too short, not even two persons will be left with necks of equal length. Hence we must respect the freedom of others as much as we value our own. What is our quarrel with the Government about? Is it not about freedom of thought? The Government arrested me because it considered my ideas to be wrong. That gentleman in the Tibbia College and the critic in Calcutta also followed the same path as the Government and so they co-operated with it. If the Hindus and the Muslims want unitedly to secure swaraj, they should learn this lesson by heart and act accordingly.

They should tolerate each other's ideas and practices and each should refrain from interfering in the practices of the other.

Those who are the first to implement this principle will score a victory. If one waits for another to give a lead, in the end both will remain where they are. If everyone says "After you", all will miss the bus.

New Supplement to "Navajivan"

An ordinary supplement to *Navajivan* continues to appear from time to time. The reader will find elsewhere in this number an announcement about a special supplement on education which is to be issued henceforward. This special education supplement will appear on the third Saturday of every month, so that the first such issue will be out on the 19th instant. From the announcement the reader will find that it was I who advised them that, instead of being issued independently, the education number should come out as a supplement to some journal. Many newspapers are published in Gujarat, even books appear in very large numbers. The growth of readership may be considered to be a good thing. Where a thousand subscribers were regarded as satisfactory, even three or four thousand are now looked upon as ordinary. Thus we must welcome this increase in the love of reading among the Gujaratis. But the responsibility of writers and those running newspapers has increased. The two big problems are : the type of material to be published and the style in which it is to be presented. The habits which the readers will contract today are likely to endure

permanently. What is true of children is also true of grown-ups. Even the grown-ups are as good as children where new experiences are concerned. If old people like some new thing and if they get used to it, they will take delight in it even like children. And, if by chance, it turns out to be undesirable, even then they will find it hard to give it up. Thus the increased love of reading among the Gujaratis may in the end prove to be harmful if it is not given a healthy turn. Therefore, the knowledge that a writer has to exercise control over his pen is one of the reasons for my hesitation. It may be doubted whether such a blemish will creep into an education supplement. But is there a limit to methods of education? I for one do not believe that all methods are good enough. There are likely to be many drawbacks in a system devised without regard to time, place and class of students. It cannot be laid down that one working in the education field should have unrestricted freedom.

The other cause of my hesitation is about the reader's pocket. Even the burden of a voluntary tax falling on the reader must not exceed a certain limit. The circulation of all newspapers, books, etc., will only be among the class of readers that has now come into being. I am afraid if such a burden becomes heavy, it may kill the desire to read.

I had requested the Vidyapith[1] to consider both these reasons for my hesitation. As a result, it has decided not to issue an independent monthly but to have a special supplement to *Navajivan* every month. Those in charge of the Vidyapith have found it necessary to have a special mouthpiece which will record the activities of the Vidyapith, express its ideas on education, and be of assistance to teachers, parents and students too. Whether they are right in this view experience alone will show. This much is clear that there is a lot for teachers, parents and even students to learn about the important activities of the Vidyapith. Let us all hope that this need will be met by the proposed enterprise. There is no doubt that, if the educated class lends a hand, this new venture will succeed brilliantly.

SAVED

For the present at least the Indians [in South Africa] appear to have been saved from the sword, hitherto hanging over their heads, in the form of confining their residence to the scavengers' Location. Smt. Sarojini's efforts appear to have succeeded in an

[1] Gujarat Vidyapith, a national university founded at Ahmedabad by Gandhiji in 1920

unexpected manner. General Smuts[1] has announced his decision to dissolve Parliament and to hold fresh elections as he felt that public opinion did not back the Union Government of South Africa. Hence the new bills which were to be passed by the present Parliament have been postponed, at least for the present. But it is not at all likely that members of the new Parliament will be inclined to do justice to Indians. It will not at all be surprising if their attitude towards the Indians in South Africa is harder even than that of the present members. Still, we should rest satisfied, for the time being at least, as "he who survives a crisis may live up to the age of a hundred years."

VALUE OF ALERT PUBLIC OPINION

We have a lot to learn from what is happening in South Africa. General Smuts has suspended the administrative work of the entire country because one representative of his party was defeated in only one city. While dissolving Parliament, he declared:

> We cannot introduce new policies contemplated by us if the public opinion does not back us. It is enough for us that the voters of one main city only gave their votes to the opposition party.

In this we see both General Smuts's adroitness and his submission to public opinion. Do we find such a thing in our country? The Government at least believes generally in flouting public opinion. Look where you will, you find disregard of public opinion. The Government must be considering the case of Hasrat Mohani or Mr. Horniman as of little importance. But even there, it does not wish to act in conformity with public opinion; it is as if it enjoys opposing it!

THIS PICTURE AND THAT

While preparations were being made for the visit of the Prince of Wales to South Africa, General Smuts sent a message to the effect that, since the whites would be busy with the new elections, the royal visit should for the present be postponed. Hence it has been put off. This is one picture, that of South Africa.

Now let us look at the picture here in 1921. On one occasion the whole population urged the Government not to invite the Prince here, but the Government did not budge from its position; it stuck to its guns. The result was so bitter that it has not yet

[1] J. C. Smuts (1870-1950); South African general and statesman; Prime Minister, 1919-24, 1939-48

been forgotten. He was insulted, without their wanting it, by the people. The people in Bombay reduced their pledge of non-violence to nothing and, for a time, the game appeared to have been lost.[1]

How long can such disregard of the people continue? The reply to this question given by the Congress at Calcutta and Nagpur[2] in the year 1920 holds good even today. To put it in one phrase: until the people are ready and fit. That is to say—

1. When the people fully wear khadi and discard foreign cloth and cloth made by mills here.
2. Or when the hearts of Hindus and Muslims unite.
3. Or when the Hindus purify themselves by welcoming into their fold untouchables and other excluded classes.
4. Or when the people learn to run the Congress properly.
5. Or when the people accept practical non-violence *in toto*—in thought, word and deed.

On pondering over the matter, we shall find that, if we carry out fully even one item out of these five, the rest will follow of their own accord.

To blame the Government or to hurl abuses at it is not only useless, it is a sign of our cowardice. As we are, so is our Government. The yardstick for measuring the people's awareness is their Government.

My "Darshan"

A friend has written to me about seeing me. I reproduce from it the following:[3]

What *darshan* of mine will this noble family have? But I for one will be blessed by its *darshan* and it will add to my strength. I shall be meeting them on Sunday and I am looking forward to the day. If all families thus implement the constructive programme of the Congress, their *darshan* will be an unfailing tonic for me and India will easily secure swaraj.

Apology to Late Motilal

Among many gifts, God has given me also the gift of well-meaning friends. They keep a watch over me always and save

[1] Gandhiji refers to the riot in Bombay in November 1921 when the Prince of Wales landed there.

[2] The special session was held at Calcutta in September and the annual session at Nagpur in December, 1920.

[3] Not translated here. The writer stated in his letter that he, his mother and sister were able to fulfil the constructive programme by spinning, weaving and wearing khadi. They, therefore, desired to have Gandhiji's *darshan* on the following Sunday.

me from errors, and when I make any, they make me correct them. Three friends have written to me brief, thoughtful post-cards and informed me that, while writing in the *Navajivan* issue of last week[1] about the customs cordon at Viramgam, I have referred to the late tailor-friend of Wadhwan as Popatlal. But his correct name is Motilal[2]. These friends' correction is right. Knowing that my memory for names and faces is very weak, the relatives and friends of Motilal will, I hope, forgive me. Though I count myself as well among his relatives and friends, I proved myself to be such a distant relative that I could not even remember his name! But Motilal's soul will certainly pardon me because I am not so thoughtless as to forget his soul. I thank all the three friends who have drawn my attention to this slip.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 13-4-1924

333. CHARGE AGAINST MAHOMED ALI

A gentleman writes to say that the Gujarati papers report Maulana Mahomed Ali as having said in a speech that Gandhi was lower than the most wretched Muslim. The correspondent suggests that, though the Maulana would never have said such a thing, the true fact should be made known through *Navajivan* so that the misunderstanding might be removed. I must admit regretfully that this report has appeared in English as well as Gujarati newspapers. There has been a lot of discussion on this matter.

God knows what has happened, but at present there is misunderstanding between Hindus and Muslims all around. They do not trust each other. I know there are various reasons for this state of affairs, but I do not consider it necessary in regard to this episode to go into them. The Hindi and Urdu newspapers in northern India have overdone the thing. Dr. Ansari writes to say that those papers regard it as their duty to make allegations against each other, to spread false rumours, to calumniate each other's religion and thereby to vilify each other. It seems this has

[1] In the preface to *Satyagraha in South Africa*; *vide* Vol. XXIX.

[2] Enthusiastic public worker of Wadhwan, in Saurashtra; he used to visit the Sabarmati Ashram every month for a few days and teach tailoring to students without taking any remuneration; also *vide An Autobiography*, Pt. V, Ch. III.

become a means of increasing the circulation of their papers. How to stop this infection from spreading has become a big problem. To solve it is, in my opinion, much more important than Council-entry. I am sure that our ability to run the administration will be seen in the course of solving it. If we can solve some of the problems confronting the people, we shall have swaraj in our hands right today. There can be no swaraj as long as we are not able to untie these knots. The Councils will not be able to solve these difficulties.

But in this article I do not propose to examine these difficulties. I wish to assess only the allegations against the Maulana.

The Maulana, who was asked in a meeting at Lucknow a question on his first speech, gave this reply: "I consider the religious principles of an adulterous Muslim to be better than Mahatma Gandhi's religious principles." Here the Maulana has not instituted a comparison between "Mahatma" Gandhi and an adulterous Muslim, but only between their religious principles. Let us also consider for a while why this comparison was made. The Muslims have charged the Maulana with having become a flatterer or worshipper of Gandhi. To worship Gandhi is to deify Gandhi, that is, to believe that there is nothing higher than Gandhi in this world. This amounts to professing Gandhi's religion, and that was the charge against the Maulana. The Maulana gave the reply quoted above to meet this allegation of some Muslims. While trying to please the Muslims, did he annoy the Hindus? If the Maulana had uttered the above-quoted sentence on some other occasion, he would not have been criticized at all. Hindu newspapers gave a distorted report of his speech. They represented that the Maulana considered an adulterous Muslim better than "Mahatma" Gandhi. We have seen that he did not say so. Moreover, in his letter to Swami Shraddhanand, he has expressed his belief that "Mahatma" Gandhi is the best man in the whole world. But he has assessed the religious principles of that "Mahatma" as lower than those of an adulterous Muslim. There is no contradiction at all in this. Moreover, almost the whole world recognizes the difference between persons and their principles.

Christian friends close to me regard me as a very good man and yet, because they consider their religion better than mine, pray to God that I may become a Christian. I received a letter two or three weeks ago from one such friend in South Africa, in which he writes:

> I was glad to hear that you were released. I always pray for you that God may give you good sense, so that you may start

believing in Jesus Christ and His power to effect deliverance. If you do so, your work would soon bear fruit.

Thus, many Christian friends desire me to become a Christian.

What do many Hindus do? Do they not consider the principles of their own religion to be far superior to those of the noblest Christian or Muslim? If they do not, will they give their daughter in marriage to the best Muslim or Christian? Again, they would not give her even to the best among Hindus if he does not belong to their own denomination or sub-caste. What does that suggest? They believe their own religion to be better than any other.

In my humble opinion, the Maulana has proved the purity of his heart and his faith in his own religion by expressing his view. He has, in fact, honoured me in two ways—first, as a friend, secondly as a man. He has honoured me as a friend because he has taken it for granted that I shall not take it ill at all if he says anything about me, that I shall never put a wrong construction on his words. He has honoured me as a man because, despite the difference in our religions and despite his belief that his religion is better than mine, he regards me as the best among men. What an implicit confidence in me! I can understand people's superstition which leads them to regard me as a good man, but how strange it is that a friend who has been in close association with me regards me as the best despite seeing the many defects in me!

I consider it very risky to regard any man as the best. Who can know his heart except God? How dirtier must they be who can hide their evil than those whose evil comes out in the open? The latter has scope for deliverance because, when the evil comes out in the open, the path to get out of it is clear. But in the other case, the evil within, kept concealed as in a box, will eat one up like poisonous germs. Deliverance is impossible for such a one in this birth. And, therefore, the Shastras have placed Truth above everything; for the same reason, they have forbidden us to hide our sins. Even if it is possible to assess any man as the best among men, it can only be after his death.

I for one cannot be confident about myself. I find it easier to be so about others. In doing so if I get cheated, I may suffer some financial loss or the world may consider me gullible. If I place too much confidence in myself and remain complacent, I shall be doomed. Since I have this opportunity, let me tell my reader that, on one occasion, when I was about to be lost through placing too much confidence in my own self, I was saved

only through God's grace. On another occasion, an adulterous friend of mine had saved me. It was of course not possible for him to save himself; but because he regarded me as pure-minded and wished that I should not allow myself to be defiled by evil, he shook me out of infatuation. Instead of keeping a watch on others and sitting in judgment over them, we should keep a watch on our own selves. If we become our own judges we shall save ourselves and save the world from our tyranny. Therefore, the true definition of swaraj is this: swaraj is control over one's own self. He who gains such control has gained everything. The saying, "The world is good, if we are ourselves good" is very meaningful.

I have not strayed from the subject and started discussion of any profound problem, but have only discussed issues arising from the subject. I tremble because my friends regard me as the best man. If I come to believe it, it will bring about my downfall, because I have yet far to climb. My aspiration has no bounds. Many are the inner enemies whom I have to conquer. The deeper I ponder, the better I come to realize my drawbacks. As I do so, I wonder what the truly best men will be like. As I ponder over this, I get some idea of *moksha* and its bliss. Then I get a faint glimpse of Divine Reality.

Now perhaps the reader will realize that the Maulana has done me great honour by regarding me as the best among men. The reader will understand the meaning of his statement better after reading his letter. I give a translation of it in this very issue.[1]

Swamiji has welcomed the Maulana's letter; he has thanked him for his frankness; he regards the Maulana as a friend of the Hindus and has appealed to those who had sent a notice of a resolution making allegations against him and asking him to submit his resignation from the Congress to withdraw that notice. But at the same time, he has also made it clear that in the case of his own religion mere principles did not count and that a man was judged by his character. By giving a reply to this, the Maulana has removed even the doubt arising from the Swamiji's writing. The Maulana does not think that a person who believes in principles need not act upon them. He merely compared two sets of religious principles and gave his opinion as to which was better. He has pointed out in another letter[2] of his that, even if the principles in which a man believes are of the best, they will avail him nothing if he does not act upon them.

[1] Not translated here; *vide*, however, Appendix XIII (A) for the original in English.

[2] *Vide* Appendix XIII (B).

Hence what Maulana Mahomed Ali has said only comes to this, that to everyone his own religion appears good. Which Hindu can controvert that statement? We shall consider on another occasion how this molehill was made into a mountain and how we can stop recurrence of such misunderstandings.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 13-4-1924

334. *SATYAGRAHA AND CASTE REFORM*

As the principle of satyagraha comes to be better understood, it is being put to ever new applications. It is used not merely in fighting the Government, but we find it being applied within the family and the caste as well. In a certain community there prevails the inhuman practice of offering girls in marriage for a consideration and a youth has felt the urge to end it. It has been asked what he should do. An easy form of satyagraha is non-co-operation. The young man wishes to banish this custom from his community. His intention is good. But should he start non-co-operation and, if so, how and against whom?

It is difficult to give a definite opinion in this particular case. But one can suggest some general rules for all situations of this type.

In the first place, one should never embark upon non-co-operation all of a sudden. Evil customs which have prevailed for ages cannot be eradicated in a moment. Reform is one-legged, and so proceeds haltingly. Anyone who loses patience can never become a pure satyagrahi. The first step for a reformer is to educate public opinion. He should meet the wise elders of the community and listen to their points of view. Maybe the reformer is a poor man, no one knows him and the elders will not listen to him. What should he do then? A poor person like this should know that he is not destined to be an instrument of reform. We may all wish that untruth may disappear from the world, but who will bring round the liars? Here is an essential reform, and yet how patiently we mark time!

The thing is that a reformer should be free from egotism. Why should we assume responsibility for ending all evils? We should be content with speaking the truth ourselves and acting truthfully. Likewise, in regard to the evil practices in the community, we should see that our own attitude and conduct are blameless and maintain a neutral attitude towards others.

To think "I do this, I do that" is ignorance, like that of the dog who thought that the cart was being drawn by him.

We should learn these lines by heart and, as they suggest, remain free from pride.

If, even then, we feel that the responsibility is ours, an especial duty devolves upon us. For example, the elders of the community cannot, professing to be humble, condone the prevailing evils, for, by accepting the position of elders, they have made themselves the guardians of its moral conduct. Even if only one girl is given away in marriage for money, the curse of that innocent girl will fall upon them.

If, however, the leaders of the community do nothing to stop evil practices and themselves follow this one of accepting money for a daughter given in marriage, what should this poor member of the community do? He has made his own life above reproach, and has met all the leading men of the community. All of them have treated him insultingly and driven him away as they might a dog. Abuse has been showered on him. Dispirited, tired and sad, he has returned home. He sees no shelter save the sky above and no support save the earth below. Now, will God hear his prayer for help? But this is only the first step. He has been tested, as he had to be, before he could be fit for *tapascharya*[1]. Now he can hear his inner voice. He asks the God within him: "Though insulted, do I yet love my brethren? Am I ready to serve them? Shall I be able to submit even to blows and kicks with their shoes?" If the in-dwelling God answers all these questions in the affirmative, then he is fit to take the second step.

Now he may start non-co-operation in the spirit of love. Such non-co-operation means giving up all rights—but not duties. What are the rights of this poor servant as a member of his community? To be invited to community dinners and to be eligible for marriage within its circle. He should, with humility, give up both these rights, and then he will have done his duty. If the elders of the community cast him off like a thorn saying in the arrogance of their authority, "One invitee less at dinners, one prospective bridegroom less," strike his name off the register, the poor servant, instead of despairing, should have confidence that from the pure seed sown by him will grow a huge tree. After fulfilling his duty—not before—may he sing: To work I have the right, never to the fruit thereof.[2]

1 Self-suffering as moral discipline

2 *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 47

This poor man of God is now a dweller in a forest. If an unmarried man, he takes a stern pledge that he would remain so until the evil had disappeared from the community and, if married, that he would live with his wife as her friend and not as a husband. If he has children, he would teach them also to observe *brahmacharya*. That he may not have to seek the help of the community or others, he would have the fewest possessions. To live thus like a sannyasi is what living in a forest means for him. In non-co-operation imbued with love there is no room at all for licence. Self-restraint alone can give it beauty. The seed which has been sown needs to be watered with self-restraint. One who thinks, "If my children do not get partners in my community, I shall find partners for them in another and will enjoy the pleasures of feasting elsewhere," is neither a man of restraint nor a non-co-operator, but a hypocrite. A non-co-operator who is a man of restraint will do *tapascharya*, living in the village of his community. It is said that in the presence of love, hatred vanishes. Living in the Himalayas, this man of God cannot claim to practise non-violence towards the community's leaders and hope to melt their hearts thereby. If the leaders of the community have disregarded him, one reason may be that they have taken him to be a thoughtless, unmannerly young man. He has yet to prove that, though poor and young, he is neither devoid of thought nor unmannerly, but is humble and thoughtful.

Working in such a spirit and serving the members of his community on occasions demanding his service and yet not hoping for a return, he will find others joining the movement for reform. Even though they may not be offering non-co-operation [against the community], their sympathy will be with him. As proud of our sacrifices and in the arrogance of our views, we abuse our friends who co-operate with the Government; this self-controlled young man will not abuse his caste-fellows because they are not with him, or express agreement with his ideas but do not go beyond that and join him in non-co-operation. He will show nothing but love for them and win their hearts. It will be his experience every day that love is the philosopher's stone. But even if he does not have this experience immediately, he will not be impatient, but will keep up his faith that the seed of love can produce nothing but the abundant fruit of love.

In the letter that I have received, I have been asked whether, when our non-co-operating man of God lets go the privilege of attending community dinners, he should also refrain from attending such dinners arranged by his friends in the community. In fact,

what is likely to happen is that, on receiving his notice of non-participation in the community dinners, headmen of the caste will excommunicate him and pronounce a punishment on any member of the community who may drink water or eat in his company or enter into marriage tie with him. That is to say, the question of his refraining from dinners given by particular individuals will not arise at all. If he is thus declared to be an outcaste, it will be the special duty of our man of self-restraint not to attend dinners given by his friends even if they invite him, openly or secretly. If, however, some caste-fellow joins him purposely in his non-co-operation, he may by all means accept an invitation by such a person. Such a thing may very well happen.

But, in general, one can say that he will have no occasion at all to decline invitations to dinners given by his friends. If, however, such an occasion does arise, he need not decline the invitation. Of course, he will never agree to accept an invitation from anyone who approves of the custom of accepting money for offering a girl in marriage.

We have noted from this that:

1. Many steps will have to be taken for educating public opinion before starting non-co-operation.
2. A non-co-operator should have the strength to put up with abuse, etc., without losing his temper.
3. There should be nothing but love in non-co-operation.
4. After starting non-co-operation, one should not leave one's town or village.
5. A non-co-operator should observe rigid self-restraint.
6. A non-co-operator should have full faith in the means which he adopts.
7. A non-co-operator should remain indifferent towards the fruits of his labours.
8. There should be judgment, thoughtfulness and humility in every step that a non-co-operator takes.
9. Everyone does not have the right or the obligation to start non-co-operation. Non-co-operation started by those who have no right to do so will fail in its aim.

If some or most people feel that the observance of these rules is almost impossible, they will be right. Pure non-co-operation is impossible without rigid self-restraint. Moreover, in the case which we have considered, that man of God is himself the doer and the beneficiary, the commander and the soldier. If there is anything wanting in him, we may take it that he has only disappointment in store for him. For anyone, therefore, who intends starting

non-co-operation in such independent fashion, the first sign of wisdom is to refrain from taking any such step. But once he has taken it, he cannot give up his ideal even if that means laying down his life.

The other question that arises is, with all this self-restraint, what reform do we hope to bring about in an exclusive institution like caste? Others, moreover, may say that when we want to abolish the caste system itself, why should we fix our attention on particular evils such as the offering of girls in marriage for money? This question is out of place here. Our reformer's question concerns his community alone. If non-co-operation within the family is regarded as proper, we must consider non-co-operation towards caste also as justified as long as castes exist.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 13-4-1924

335. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

JUHU,
Sunday [April 13, 1924][1]

DEAR MOTILALJI,

Here is the draft as corrected by me. If you and other friends pass it, I can issue it as soon as you desire.[2] I feel that I must remove the clause fixing the period of probation. But I can say to the friends definitely that I have no intention of moving the repeal of the Cocanada resolution. Only I do not know the implications of the clause as it stands. The rest of the corrections don't call for any remark. But I draw your attention to the last two sentences added by me. Their meaning is plain. They are intended to embody somewhat the conversation of yesterday.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 8715

[1] Sunday following April 11, when the 'Draft' forwarded with this letter was prepared, fell on April 13.

[2] Motilal Nehru embodied his reactions in a lengthy note; *vide* Appendix XIV(A). He also sent C. R. Das a copy of Gandhiji's first draft. The latter, acknowledging this on April 18, expressed his anxiety to discuss it with Gandhiji and requested him to postpone its publication till then. *Vide* Appendix XIV(B).

336. LETTER TO N. C. KELKAR

POST ANDHERI,
April 13, 1924

DEAR MR. KELKAR,

I have your letter. I have written to Mr. Sheriff Devji Kanji.[1] He has written to me in reply raising difficulties as to the terms of reference. I see Mr. Potdar does likewise. I can only suggest that, if you send me the terms of reference, I shall submit them to him and, if he suggests any, I shall submit them to you. I have asked Mr. Sheriff Devji Kanji to meet me on Thursday next.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

N. C. KELKAR, ESQ.
THE "KESARI" AND THE "MAHRATTA" OFFICE
POONA CITY

From a photostat: S.N. 8727

337. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

[ANDHERI,
April 13, 1924]

Vaikom satyagrahis undoubtedly arrived at a delicate state, so many leaders having been picked up by the Travancore authorities. Appeal has been made to all-India leaders to lead the movement. It is a question how far a local movement, on reaching a critical stage, can be turned into an all-India movement. All-India sympathy I can understand and that Vaikom satyagrahis are having in abundance, but to concentrate active energies of leaders from different provinces on a single local movement seems to be a difficult, if not an impossible, task. I am hoping, however, that leaders in the Madras Presidency will not allow the movement to die for want of proper lead. A telegram[2] was sent to Mr. George Joseph before his arrest advising dropping of fast. As he is not likely to have received my letter which followed the telegram,

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Sherif Devji Kanji", 20-3-1924.
[2] *Vide* "Telegram to George Joseph", 11-4-1924.

I hand it for publication, which sums up my position. It is not affected by recent developments.

The Hindu, 14-4-1924

338. TELEGRAM TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI[1]

ANDHERI,
[On or after *April 13, 1924*]

RECEIVED WIRE. IF HEALTH PERMITS YOU MAY GO NOT NECESSARILY COURT ARREST BUT REGULATE MOVEMENT. YOU SHOULD NEGOTIATE WITH DIWAN AND INVITE IF THEY WILL COME OTHER LEADERS PARTICIPATE AFTER ALL YOU ARE BEST JUDGE SITUATION. DEVDAS AT YOUR SERVICE IF REQUIRED.

GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 10279

339. TELEGRAM TO T. R. KRISHNASWAMY IYER[2]

[ANDHERI,
April 14, 1924]

[KRISHNASWAMIER
CARE NEWS
COCHIN]

CONGRATULATION OVER SO MANY ARRESTS. DO NOT COURT ARREST WITHOUT PROPER ARRANGEMENTS. WILL WIRE AGAIN. REPORT SITUATION. WRITING.[3]

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 10277

[1] This was in reply to the telegram from C. Rajagopalachari received on April 13, 1924, which read: "Joseph arrested. Telegram asks me take his place. Wire your advice." George Joseph had also wired Gandhiji on April 12: "Am arrested. Satyagraha must continue. Overwhelming public support and numerous volunteers. Leadership only needed. Send Devadas or Mahadeo. Wife remains in Chengamer. Asking for blessings."

[2] This was sent in response to the following telegram from Iyer : "All leaders arrested. Volunteers remain seated from tenth morning on prevention. No volunteers arrested. Myself waiting Cochin since Vaikom means arrest. Pray send somebody to lead."

[3] To this Krishnaswamy Iyer replied : "Your message thanks. Arrangements being made. Satyagrahis cheerfully holding on. Instructions given discontinue fasting. Satyagraha headquarter arranged here. Myself charge."

340. LETTER TO H. G. PERRY[1]

BOMBAY,
[On or after *April 14, 1924*]

DEAR MR. PERRY,

If you could come on Sunday next at 2 p.m., I shall be glad to see you. I do not know that I shall have much to say, as my talks with the Swarajist leaders are not yet finished.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat : S.N. 8728

341. LETTER TO GANGABEHN MEGHJI[2]

Chaitra Sud 11 [*April 15, 1924*]

DEAR SISTER,

Every day I think of writing to you, but what with one thing and another, I forget to do so. Today I am writing this immediately after the morning prayers. I was to have sent Ramdas to you for learning music, but did not, for I did not think it proper to disregard Mr. Jayakar, who has taken great pains for him.[3] It would have been too much of a burden even for Ramdas to be sent to two places on the same day, and so I have dropped the idea for the time being.

Nevertheless, we should thank the music teacher for readily agreeing to teach Ramdas.

Please see me as soon as you get some time.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS GANDHI

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 7775. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

[1] This was in reply to Perry's inquiry of April 14 whether Gandhiji could give him brief interview for the *Daily Express*, London, on the subject of "present demands and revised advice for the attainment of swaraj".

[2] Later known as Gangabehn Vaidya

[3] Ramdas used to go to Jayakar for taking lessons in music during the time Gandhiji was staying at Juhu.

342. INTERVIEW TO "THE HINDU"

[BOMBAY,
April 15, 1924]

...At four in the evening yesterday, when our representative was taken into his presence, Mahatmaji was engaged in reading an Urdu book. There was Mr. Andrews writing in a front room.

Questioned by our representative: "What is your opinion on the untouchability satyagraha organized in Travancore? How can the country as a whole help it and what is the best form of rendering help?" Mahatmaji, replying at length, said :

From what I know of the leaders of the movement I have no doubt that they have acted with great caution and deliberation and that they have embarked upon it after having taken preliminary steps. From the reports I have been receiving, I believe that the Madras Presidency will supply the lead that will be required. I do not think that the leaders from all the parts of India can spare themselves and concentrate their energy directly on the movement. But the whole of the Indian Press can give due prominence to the movement and I am glad to notice that it is receiving such prominence. Beyond this moral support, I hardly think all-India efforts can go further and, if the movement retains its continuous purity and non-violence, public support it must win in the end.

Q. "How would you solve the problem of the lack of leaders even after the few who will have gone there are arrested?" Mahatmaji replied :

A letter that I have received shows that the movement has gone so far that volunteers will continue to offer satyagraha, even when all the leaders are arrested. I would also advise that at least one leader keeps himself in reserve and directs the movement without courting arrest.

To a further question : "Supposing that even the leader who wants to reserve himself is also arrested or finds that he must offer himself for arrest, do you think it possible to conduct such a movement without leadership?" Mahatmaji answered :

In my opinion, satyagraha is one such movement, in which after a certain stage it is the easiest to continue without leadership. This is its inherent quality and strength. In satyagraha there is no such thing as diplomacy and manoeuvering, as we under-

stand the terms. The road is narrow, I admit; but it is straight and, therefore, simple. Only the will is required, but no cunning after all. What have the volunteers to do but simply to offer satyagraha till the right, for which it is offered, is vindicated? If those who are opposing offer any settlement, they will secure the release of the leaders who are arrested. That was exactly what happened in South Africa. It was when almost all the leaders were arrested that Mr. Gokhale was frightened and sent Mr. Andrews and Mr. Pearson. Whilst their help was invaluable, it was not necessary to keep the sacrificial fire going. They were useful for conducting negotiations.[1] But the real suffering was the privilege of the rank and file.

"Does not the campaign location in an Indian State detract from its value as a part of the great Non-co-operation movement?" inquired our representative.

I do not regard this campaign as a part of the Non-co-operation movement, as such. It is certainly a part of satyagraha. But it has no direct connection with the Non-co-operation movement. Satyagraha is an eternal principle. I am sure that it has come to stay and we shall find, as time marches on, that it is applied in a variety of ways. I have dealt with one such instance in the columns of the *Navajivan*.[2] An enthusiastic reformer wishes to apply satyagraha to the solution of a corrupt practice in his caste, viz., the sale of daughters to the highest bidder. He wants to stop this inhuman practice by courting suffering for the sake of his caste sisters. If he does offer satyagraha in this case, we would not call it a part of the Non-co-operation movement. I know that there is much difference between this instance and the Vaikom movement. The latter is being conducted by Congressmen and has reference to one plank in the Non-co-operation movement, that is, untouchability. Nevertheless, it is clear to me that it cannot be called a part of the Non-co-operation movement. Whether such a movement at the present stage should be initiated in an Indian State is a question which should be considered on its merits. If the Vaikom movement was a part of the political movement, which is being conducted in British India, it is absolutely clear to me that it should be dropped. I am personally averse to Congressmen creating directly or indirectly any complications in Indian States, who are themselves no better circumstanced than British Indian subjects. A mere Resident or Political Agent is enough to frighten Rajas and Maharajas out of their wits. They simply cannot resist

[1] *Vide* Vol. XII, pp. 315-56.
[2] *Vide* "Satyagraha and Caste Reform", 13-4-1924.

any the slightest pressure from the British authorities. This Vaikom movement is a socio-religious movement. It has no immediate or ulterior political motive behind it. In its inception it was not directed against the Travancore Durbar. It was directed purely against an age-long, intolerable sacerdotal prejudice. So far as I know, the Durbar has intervened purely in the interests of peace, fearing, rightly or wrongly, that the presence of satyagrahis on these prohibited roads would result in a breach of peace. If the Maharaja himself was a reformer and held strong views against untouchability, he might have thrown in his might in favour of the satyagrahis and protected them from molestation. But I am informed he is no reformer in this direction. That being so, his advisers concern themselves merely in taking steps to preserve peace. The leaders on the spot can however still keep the movement within proper bounds and prevent it from becoming anti-Durbar.

"How has the presence of Mrs. Naidu affected the anti-Asiatic legislation in South Africa? How has it benefited the Indian community?" questioned our representative. Paying a most glowing tribute to Mrs. Naidu, Mahatmaji said :

From all the accounts I have received from Mrs. Naidu herself and from my old South African friends, I am convinced that her presence in South Africa has done much good to our countrymen there. She has undoubtedly given them courage and hope and she has by her matchless gifts won over to our side many Europeans. In any case, the bitter feelings have undoubtedly softened down. In one of her letters[1] to me she says that her words moved her European audience to tears. If that letter was not an exceptionally personal letter, I would have shared it with you. I think that the *Cape Times's* severe judgment on Mrs. Naidu's activity was totally one-sided. It did not reflect cultured European opinion. In my opinion, she has acted with great tact and judgment. It was not to be expected that she would produce any permanent effect upon the European opinion. That can only be produced by the exemplary conduct of the resident Indians and their capacity for united action and suffering.

Asked as to what he thought was the best solution of the Hindu-Muslim problem, Mahatmaji said :

[1] The reference is to Sarojini Naidu's letter dated February 29, in the course of which she wrote: "...I have been able to move thousands of men and women in these 2 days to tears under the influence and stimulus of your inspiration. Something has come to me since I entered the Transvaal, and the heart of the enemy even as it dissents melts...as I speak...." S.N. 9918

I would prefer not to make any statement in connection with this question, until I have seen the leaders who have made this question their primary consideration. I hold very strong views on it and so far as I can see they are not likely to be affected by further argument. But I do not want to be hasty, and so far as it is possible for a man to do so, I want to keep my mind open till the very last moment.

To the question on *Shuddhi* and *Sanghatan*, Mahatmaji answered :

My views on the question will be expressed when I am ready to make my pronouncement on the whole question.

Till the Council question was fully discussed with the Swarajist leaders and Mr. Das's presence is awaited, Mahatmaji declined to make a statement. Conversations are no doubt proceeding with Pandit Motilal Nehru, who is staying in Juhu at a short distance from Mahatmaji's residence. Mahatmaji, however, was fully alive to the work done by the Swarajists in Council.

To the question put by our representative, "Do you give credit to the Swarajists for your release?" Mahatmaji promptly replied with a smile:

In so far as I may be bound to apportion credit for my release I certainly think that the stand taken up by the Swarajists on the question was one of the chief contributory causes.

The Hindu, 17-4-1924

343. TELEGRAM TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

ANDHERI,
[On or after *April 15, 1924*][1]

MY REPLY[2] REGARDING FAST PUBLISHED PRESS HUNGER-STRIKE UNLAWFUL. THINK VYKOM STRUGGLE SHOULD BE KEPT UP UNDER RESERVATIONS SUGGESTED.

GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 10280

[1] This was in reply to the telegram from C. Rajagopalachari received on April 15, 1924, which read: "Kerala itself unable without outside help in leaders men money. Myself physically unequal strain of campaign. Tamilnadu can send workers dislocating khaddar work if you consider campaign as conceived worth it. Regarding general question read letters already addressed Devdas, Pyarelal. Volunteers not arrested now but road physically blocked. No alternative but hunger strike. Do you approve this. Wire advice." S.N. 10280

[2] This refers to Gandhiji's telegram and letter of April 12 to George Joseph; *vide* also "Interview to Associated Press of India," 13-4-1924.

344. LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR

[After *April 15, 1924*][1]

I am deeply thankful to you for the attention you are giving Ramdas. I think that the regular training he is having at present from you is likely to do him good and steady him.

I hope your mother is making satisfactory progress after her operation. Give her my very kind regards.

The Story of My Life, Vol. II, p. 265

345. LETTER TO SWAMI ANAND

Wednesday [April 16, 1924][2]

BHAISHRI ANANDANAND,

Three letters of yours have remained unanswered. But what could I do? For me too, as for the poor ascetic, the only shelter is the heavens above and the earth below. You will read about this gentleman in today's article. Why did you, even for a moment, think that I praise you because you are at a distance from me? If I have praised you, it must have been necessary at that time. I praise myself, too, on occasion. I have praised Ba, and have frequently praised Devdas also. Now tell me who is near and who is at a distance? Do you understand that nothing but a mere hint would have been proper in regard to Mahadev and Kaka? I cherish some pride that, in such matters, I possess a pretty good sense of proportion and, do what I will, I cannot get over it.

I have done exactly according to your suggestion in regard to the History of Satyagraha. I liked it. To make it too long would not have been advisable either.

I cannot say whether it is desirable or not to print the matter for the book, too, right now. In the book, a few changes may have to be made, and it would be better to compose the matter

[1] From the reference to Ramdas' taking lessons in music it appears this letter was written after the "Letter to Gangabehn Meghji", 15-4-1924.

[2] The publication of the *Kelavani* issue, an educational supplement to *Navajivan*, referred to in the letter was started on April 19, 1924. The preceding Wednesday fell on April 16.

afresh. But you know what is best in this matter. I would not blow your trumpet if I did not know this.

Print the *Kelavani* issue in such a way that it will bring us credit. Do use good quality paper. It must be such that it can be preserved. Let Mahadev or Swami make the necessary corrections in the sentences in that issue as well as in this. They should also let me know whether I should send every time as much as I am sending with this, or more. As for the English material, I shall post all of it tomorrow. I shall send a little on Tuesday, if that becomes necessary.

From time to time give me information about the number of subscribers and sales of *Navajivan* and *Young India*.

Send me immediately the figures of subscribers to *Navajivan* from Kathiawar, from the rest of Gujarat, from Bombay—I include these in the second—and from Ahmedabad too, as also the figures of sales by hawkers and sales in other parts of the country. I shall know then how to distribute the sum of Rs. 50,000.

From the Gujarati original: G.N. 7756

346. *TELEGRAM TO DR. M. A. ANSARI*[1]

[On or after *April 16, 1924*]

THANK GOD HOPE IMPROVEMENT WILL CONTINUE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 8732

[1] This was in reply to Dr. Ansari's telegram of April 15, 1924, received by Gandhiji on April 16, which read: "Shaukat's temperature normal for greater part yesterday also today. Don't trouble Doctor Mehta. Mahomedali started last night for Bombay."

347. TELEGRAM TO KALICHARAN[1]

[On or after *April 16, 1924*]

SORRY HEALTH WILL NOT PERMIT PRESIDE OR ATTEND CONFERENCE.

GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 8733

348. MY JAIL EXPERIENCES–I

The reader knows that I am a hardened criminal. It was not for the first time that I found myself a prisoner in the March of 1922. I had three previous South African convictions to my credit, and as I was regarded at the time by the South African Government as a dangerous criminal, I was moved from jail to jail and was able, therefore, to gather much experience of jail life.[2] I had, before the Indian conviction, passed through six prisons and had come in touch with as many Superintendents and many more jailors. When, therefore, during the beautiful night of the 10th of March I was taken to the Sabarmati Jail together with Mr. Banker, I did not feel any awkwardness which always attends upon a strange and new experience. I almost felt I was going from one home to another in order to make more conquests of love. The preliminaries were more like being taken to a pleasure-trip than to jail. The courteous Superintendent of Police, Mr. Healy, would not even enter the Ashram, but sent Anasuyabai with a message that he had a warrant for my arrest and that a car awaited me at the Ashram Gate. I was to take whatever time I needed for getting ready. Mr. Banker, who was on his way back to Ahmedabad, was met by Mr. Healy on the way and already arrested. I was not at all unprepared for the news that Anasuyabai brought. As a

[1] This was in reply to Kalicharan's telegram of April 16, 1924 which read : "Resolved to call All-India Depressed Classes Round Table Conference on 31st May 1st June at Gondia through C.P. and Berar Depressed Classes Associations and earnestly request you alone to preside and decide all questions concerning us once for all."

[2] For Gandhiji's earlier jail experiences, *vide* Vol. VIII and IX; a condensed version appeared in *Young India*, 29-6-1922, 20-7-1922 and 10-8-1922.

matter of fact, after having waited long enough for the coming of the warrant which everybody thought was imminent, I had given instructions that all should retire and I was myself about to lay myself to bed. I had returned that evening from Ajmer after a fatiguing journey where most reliable information was given to me that a warrant had been sent to Ajmer for my arrest, but the authorities would not execute the warrant, as the very day that the warrant reached Ajmer, I was going back to Ahmedabad. The real news of the warrant, therefore, came as a welcome relief. I took with me an extra *kuchh* (loin-cloth), two blankets, and five books: *Bhagavad Gita*, *Ashram Hymn Book*, *Ramayana*, Rodwell's translation of the Koran, a presentation copy of the *Sermon on the Mount* sent by schoolboys of a high school in California with the hope that I would always carry it with me. The Superintendent, Khan Bahadur N. R. Wacha, received us kindly, and we were taken to a separate block of cells situated in a spacious, clean compound. We were permitted to sleep on the verandah of the cells, a rare privilege for prisoners. I enjoyed the quiet and the utter silence of the place. The next morning we were taken to the Court for preliminary examination. Both Mr. Banker and I had decided not only not to offer any defence but in no way to hamper the prosecution, but rather to help it. The preliminary examination was, therefore, quickly over. The case was committed to the Sessions, and as we were prepared to accept short service, the trial was to take place on the 18th of March. The people of Ahmedabad had risen to the occasion. Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel had issued strict instructions that there should be no crowds gathering near the Court-house and that there should be no demonstration of any kind whatsoever. There were, therefore, in the Court-house only a select body of visitors, and the police had an easy time of it, which I could see was duly appreciated by the authorities.

The week before the trial was passed in receiving visitors who were generally permitted to see us without restriction. We were allowed to carry on correspondence so long as it was harmless and submitted to the Superintendent. As we willingly carried out all the Jail regulations, our relations with the Jail officials were smooth and even cordial during the week that we were in Sabarmati. Khan Bahadur Wacha was all attention and politeness, but it was impossible not to notice his timidity in everything he did. He seemed to apologize for his Indian birth and unconsciously to convey that he would have done more for us had he been a European. Being an Indian, even in allowing facilities which the regulations permitted, he was afraid of the Collector and the Inspector-General

of Prisons and every official who was at all superior to him. He knew that, if it came to a struggle between himself and the Collector or the Inspector-General of Prisons, he had nobody to back him up at the Secretariat. The notion of inferiority haunted him at every step. What was true outside was equally true, if not truer, inside the Jail. An Indian official would not assert himself, not because he could not, but because he lived in mortal fear of degradation, if not dismissal. If he was to retain his post and obtain promotion, he must please his superiors even to the point of ringer and even at the sacrifice of principles. The contrast became terrible when we were transferred to Yeravda. The European Superintendent had no fear of the Inspector-General of Prisons. He could claim just as much influence at the Secretariat as the latter. The Collector for him was almost an interloper. His Indian superiors he held cheap and, therefore, he was not afraid to do his duty when he wished and was equally unafraid to neglect it, when discharge of duty was an onerous task. He knew that, as a rule, he was always safe. This sense of safety enables young European officers often to do the right thing in spite of opposition either from the public or from the Government, and he has also often driven coach and six through all regulations, all instructions and defied public opinion.

Of the trial and the sentence I need say nothing as the reader knows all about it, except to acknowledge the courtesy which was extended to us by all the officials including the Judge and the Advocate-General. The wonderful restraint that was observed by the small crowd of people that was seen in and about the Court, and the great affection showed by them can never be effaced from memory. The sentence of six years' simple imprisonment I regarded as light. For, if Section 124 A of the Penal Code did really constitute [my action] a crime and the Judge administering the laws of the land could not but hold it as a crime, he would be perfectly justified in imposing the highest penalty. The crime was repeatedly and wilfully committed, and I can only account for the lightness of the sentence by supposing not that the Judge took pity on me, for I asked for none, but that he could not have approved of Section 124 A. There are many instances of judges having signified their disapproval of particular laws by imposing the minimum sentence, even though the crime denoted by them might have been fully and deliberately committed. He could not very well impose a lighter sentence seeing that the late Lokamanya was sentenced to six years' imprisonment for a similar offence.

The sentence over, we were both taken back to the prison, this time as fully convicted prisoners, but there was no change in the treatment accorded to us. Some friends were even permitted to accompany us. Leave-taking in the Jail was quite jovial. Mrs. Gandhi and Anasuyabai bore themselves bravely as they parted. Mr. Banker was laughing all the time and I heaved a sigh of relief, thanking God that all was over so peacefully and that I would be able to have some rest and still feel that I was serving the country, if possible more than when I was travelling up and down addressing huge audiences. I wish I could convince the workers that imprisonment of a comrade does not mean so much loss of work for a common cause. If we believe, as we have so often proclaimed we do, that unprovoked suffering is the surest way of remedying a wrong in regard to which the suffering is gone through, surely it follows as a matter of course that imprisonment of a comrade is no loss. Silent suffering undergone with dignity and humility speaks with an unrivalled eloquence. It is solid work because there is no ostentation about it. It is always true because there is no danger of miscalculation. Moreover, if we are true workers, the loss of a fellow-worker increases our zest and, therefore, capacity for work. And so long as we regard anybody as irreplaceable, we have not fitted ourselves for organized work. For organized work means capacity for carrying it on in spite of depletion in the ranks. Therefore, we must rejoice in the unmerited suffering of friends or ourselves and trust that the cause, if it is just, will prosper through such suffering.

Young India, 17-4-1924

349. *'THE WHISPER OF THE WHEEL'*

The following enthusiastic description of the possibilities of the spinning-wheel cannot fail to be of general interest. The writer is a U.P. graduate and is himself a practised spinner. He does not wish his name to be advertised.

> I am a simple thing and anybody can understand my mechanism. I can be bought for a rupee or two. I am portable and easily accessible to all. I am much lighter than the grinding-stone, therefore, I am most popular with the fair sex. I am in demand at the time of marriages. My production satisfies the religious want of the Pandits because I am always sacred. I can give bread to the millions of starving villagers of India, can clothe the farmers, can give a livelihood to beggars, can give

a dignified profession to the fallen sisters and those whose modesty is otherwise exposed to the assaults of lustful persons. I am in the habit of demolishing "devils' workshops" by keeping busy all idle men's minds, if they care to turn me. I feed the weavers, the carders, the ironsmiths and the carpenters. I can save the heavy drainage of India that has been sapping her very life-blood—I can effect real unity between the different communities of India by making them independent, I can ameliorate the conditions of the untouchables by making it easy to find a market for the yarn produced by them, I can establish real peace in India by teaching its inhabitants self-respect and self-reliance and thus render it absolutely impossible for other nations to come to India with the idea of exploiting her. I can introduce simplicity in life and make the opulent condescend to talk with the mill-hands. I can destroy the pride of the capitalists by abolishing the factory system and thus putting an end to the ever-multiplying miseries of the labourers, and by being a menace to ambition and love of aggrandisement. I am thus a harbinger of peace and restorer of financial health to India and impartial distributor of wealth.

But to school students I am something more: I am an examiner of their abilities, I am a barometer to their nature. Give me to a rash boy and I will tell all at once that he is such, because his yarn will be untwisted and irregular. Place me in the hands of serious boy: I will at once know that he is promising, because his yarn will be regular, and indicative of a balanced hand.

I am not merely an examiner; I am an instructor too. I can train the mind of a boy (if he turns me daily) so well that he will be a good surgeon if he goes to the George Hospital, Lucknow, with a certificate from me. His operations will mostly be successful and his judgment most accurate. I warrant a regular spinner can be a good mathematician because the law governs both the sciences. It would be no exaggeration to say that spinning is practical mathematics. If you err, your mistakes will at once be detected.

Just as bluntness in the edge of a razor spoils a shave, just as caustic acid [*sic*] spoils a picture and just as adoration without faith is meaningless, in the same way no amount of coaching is of any avail without concentration which the youths of these days so utterly lack. I am a specialist in training the boys in concentration and I claim to do immense good in this direction to the boy who befriends me.

Young India, 17-4-1924

350. SCHOOLMASTERS AND LAWYERS

I hope you have by this time been able to consult friends who were led to modify, at Delhi, the Congress resolution regarding the Triple Boycott. What final decision have you come to? Are you going to preach them over again in the same form?

As to the boycott of Councils, I may not say anything; the leaders of the Swaraj Party might have clearly laid before you facts and arguments. The work they are doing and are likely to do is before you. As to the boycott of schools and colleges, it has, if I may say from my own experience, completely failed. I may refer to my own case. Here there are two full-fledged high schools, attended by more than 500 pupils each, while the National High School has barely 30 boys on the roll. We have tried all possible ways and means for canvassing boys, but have failed. I have been convinced that people are not prepared for this boycott.

As to the third boycott, there were only a very few lawyers who gave up their practice. Now almost all have rejoined. The number of court-going people never diminished. The *Lavad*[1] Courts established by national workers never thrived and have since died. These courts, having had no power to enforce their decisions, and the people being not trained to submit, cannot be expected to attain any palpable success.

Under these circumstances what are we—who boycotted our further education and prospects at the clarion call of the Congress to sacrifice for the sake of the country only one year—to do? We have sacrificed not only one year but three. We established national schools for the people and the people heed them not. The sacrifice of the workers is not appreciated. Are not the national schools with such poor attendance a useless waste of the public money, energy and life? Does it not mean that our efforts and plans are premature? Our sacrifice gives no satisfaction to ourselves too. It is often a hindrance to patriotism or national enthusiasm. Khaddar is dearer than mill-cloth and our means are poor. Though elected delegates to the Congress, we cannot attend or have to refuse the seat, for want of the necessary money required for travelling and other expenses. We have to earn money not for luxury but as a necessity. But our ways are blocked by the Congress.

I have a family to support and a delicate constitution, and hence cannot bear the hardship of village propaganda. The Congress has practically no work at present. What I think is that the Congress should arrange for the maintenance of workers and admit only those whom it can support.

1 Arbitration

It should give permission to all others to follow their own pursuits patriotically and be soldiers of the militia (irregular army), ready at the country's call whenever required. Such people will enter Government and semi-Government schools and teach their prescribed books and lessons with a patriotic angle of vision. They will join the Bar and show to the people at every step what a waste of time and money the Courts are. They will enter the military and refuse to fire on their own brethren. And so on. I know not what you intend to do after your recovery. In the meanwhile I seek your advice. I think that I am doing no better service to the people and to the country by remaining the headmaster of the national school here, which is not appreciated and supported by the public. May I complete my law education and join the Bar and do what humble services I can to the Motherland? Will you advise the Congress to remove these boycotts and devise some other ways and means for attaining freedom? Or are you going to take up these boycotts in right earnest again? May we wait?

PS. It is no question of conscience and religion. I look at Non-co-operation only as a means.

The foregoing letter sums up succinctly the argument advanced by my correspondents and visitors against the boycott of schools and law-courts. As usual the sting is in the tail. The postscript yields the secret of unbelief in the boycott. One need not regard everything as a matter of conscience or religion to be able to stick to it through thick and thin. Even one's means may be so vital that giving them up may mean death. Lungs are the means whereby we breathe and sustain life. They are not life. But their destruction is destruction of life itself. No one questions that non-co-operation is a means. The question is : Is non-co-operation as conceived in 1920 the only means of reaching our goal? The Congress decided that it was. But the Congress merely represents the opinion of the delegates for the time being. Some of us evidently consider that it was a mistake to think that it was the only means. Some others think that it was one of the means and many more should have been adopted at the same time. Yet others, though they disbelieved in it, adopted it out of regard for the decision of the majority and because they think that the decisions of the Congress have a mandatory character and bind the minority whether in matters of principle or detail. Yet others adhere to the opinion formed by them in 1920 that non-co-operation as then conceived is the only means for achieving our goal. I belong to the last category and it will be my humble duty from time to time to show why it is the only means. My correspondent evidently belongs to the opposite school.

I have repeatedly observed that no school of thought can claim a monopoly of right judgment. We are all liable to err and are often obliged to revise our judgments. In a vast country like this, there must be room for all schools of honest thought. And the least, therefore, that we owe to ourselves as to others is to try to understand the opponent's view-point and, if we cannot accept it, respect it as fully as we would expect him to respect ours. It is one of the indispensable tests of a healthy public life and, therefore, fitness for swaraj. If we have no charity and no tolerance, we shall never settle our differences amicably and must therefore always submit to the arbitrament of a third party, i.e., to foreign domination. I invite the reader, then, to share with me the respect that is due to the view set forth by my correspondent and, if he belongs to the correspondent's school of thought, bear with me even though I cannot see eye to eye with him.

In my opinion, the boycott of schools and law-courts has been both a failure and a success. It has been largely, not wholly, a failure in that schools and law-courts have not been effectively or even appreciably deserted. But it has been a success in that the halo surrounding Government schools and law-courts has disappeared. People believe, much more now than they did before, in the necessity of independent national schools and settlement of disputes by panchayats. Lawyers and Government schoolmasters have lost much of the artificial prestige they enjoyed five years ago. I count these as no small gains. Let me not be misunderstood. I do not undervalue the sacrifices and devotion to the country of schoolmasters and lawyers. Dadabhai and Gokhale were schoolmasters. Pherozeshah Mehta and Badruddin Tyabji were lawyers. But I would not have even these distinguished countrymen of ours to claim the exclusive monopoly of wisdom or ability to guide. The spinner, the weaver, the farmer, the artisan, the trader have just as much right to shape the destiny of the country as the members of the so-called liberal professions. As the latter have represented the arm of authority, we have been awed by them and to that extent they have accustomed us to think that we can satisfy our wants only through the Government instead of teaching us that the Government is a creation of the people and merely an instrument for giving effect to their will. This false prestige of privileged classes has suffered a shock from which I hope it will never recover.

That national schools and panchayats have not flourished, as they might have, is due to a variety of causes, some avoidable and others unavoidable. We have been new to the work and therefore

we have not known how to go about it. For me, therefore, the poverty of results is not a cause for disappointment but for greater and more enlightened effort. Our failures we can convert into so many steps to success.

The village work frightens us. We who are town-bred find it trying to take to the village life. Our bodies in many cases do not respond to the hard life. But it is a difficulty which we have to face boldly, even heroically, if our desire is to establish swaraj for the people, not substitute one class rule by another, which may be even worse.[1] Hitherto the villagers have died in their thousands so that we might live. Now we might have to die so that they may live. The difference will be fundamental. The former have died unknowingly and involuntarily. Their enforced sacrifice has degraded us. If now we die knowingly and willingly, our sacrifice will ennoble us and the whole nation. Let us not flinch from the necessary sacrifice, if we will live as an independent, self-respecting nation.

The difficulty with the non-co-operating lawyers is greater still. They have unfortunately been used to a highly artificial life totally out of harmony with their national surroundings. I regard it as a crime that any lawyer or doctor should charge or get, say, Rs. 1,000 per day or for that matter even Rs. 100 per day. It is no answer to the indictment that it is the monied men who pay and there can be no harm, but it may be all to the good if lawyers take money from the rich people and use a part for the public good. If the profession was disinterested and charged only enough for maintenance, the monied men would also have to revise their budget. As it is, we seem to be moving in a vicious circle.

If under swaraj we shall have to make the town life correspond to the village life, we shall be bound to simplify the town mode of life. The beginning has to be made now. Why should lawyers feel so utterly helpless as they seem to do now? Is starvation the only alternative if they cannot resume practice? Is it impossible for a resourceful lawyer to turn his attention to weaving or any other honourable toil?

It is difficult for me to advise non-co-operating lawyers and schoolmasters. If they believe in the boycott, they should face all difficulties and continue the boycott. If they do not believe in it, they can, without any disgrace attaching to their action, rejoin the profession. As I do not believe in the mandate theory, I

[1] For Gandhiji's reply to Bhagwandas's criticism of these views, *vide* Vol. XXIV, "Note on Bhagwandas's Letter", 8-5-1924.

do not consider it to be obligatory on any schoolmaster or lawyer to refrain from rejoining Government schools or law-courts because of the continuance of the boycott resolution. I would still advocate the retention of the boycott, to be worked out not by propaganda for emptying Government schools and courts (that was done and had to be done during 1920 and 1921), but by the constructive method of establishing and popularizing national schools and panchayats.

Young India, 17-4-1924

351. NOTES

Maulana Shaukat Ali's Illness

The readers of *Young India* will be sorry to learn that Maulana Shaukat Ali, who has been ailing for some time and is being treated by Dr. Ansari under his own roof, is not making such progress as was at one time expected. Both Maulana Mahomed Ali and Dr. Ansari say in their letters just received that the patient is feeling very weak and requires most careful nursing. I invite the readers to join me in the prayer that our distinguished countryman may soon be restored to complete health.

Talks with Leaders

Statements have appeared in the Press about the talks between the Swarajist leaders and myself. I ask the readers to discount them as altogether premature. No final conclusions have been reached. Mr. C. R. Das has not even been able to attend these talks and, as he has been asked by his medical advisers to take prolonged rest, he may not be able to come at all. In no case is it possible to make any statement before the views of Mr. Das and other friends are known.

I understand that the workers are vegetating because of the suspense caused by the talks and the confusion caused by unauthorised journalistic ventures. I would ask the workers not to worry over the result of the talks. I can give them my assurance that there is not the slightest likelihood of any change being advocated by me in the constructive programme. Anyone, therefore, suspending his activity in that direction will make a grievous blunder and retard the progress of the constructive work which needs all the time of all the workers that can be got together for the work.

FOR WORKERS

A friend has suggested that I should convene a meeting of workers so as to confer with them even as I am conferring with the leaders. At one time I thought it was a good plan, but I see that it is not feasible. But what has finally decided me against such a conference is my own physical condition. I can hardly bear the strain of a prolonged sitting at an early date. Any such conference to be useful must be called as soon as possible and not later than the end of this month. But I see that I shall not be equal to the task by that time. And, after all, what will such a conference do? I am gathering all the information I can. I shall soon reach conclusions on the vexed questions of the day. Whatever weight may attach to my opinion, it must remain the opinion of an individual and therefore have no authority. The only authoritative opinion for Congressmen can be that of the Working Committee and the All-India Congress Committee in the absence of the whole Congress. My tentative opinions may form a fit subject for discussion when the All-India Congress Committee meets. The Working Committee meets too early for me and in no case can it lay down any new policy or programme without reference to the A.I.C.C.

Whilst, therefore, there need be no conference of workers, if they will give me as briefly as possible their opinion on all the questions that may be agitating them, it will be of the greatest assistance to me in forming my own judgment. Any such communications should reach me before the end of this month and addressed Post Andheri, Bombay.

THE GURDWARA MOVEMENT

Another Jatha of 500 has surrendered peacefully when it was intercepted in its progress to the Gangsar Gurdwara and placed under arrest by the Nabha authorities. If we had not become used to such arrests and the like, they would create a sensation in the country. Now they have become ordinary occurrences and excite little curiosity and less surprise or pain. Their moral value increases in the same ratio as popular interest in them seems to have died. These arrests, when they cease to be sensational, also cease to afford intoxication. People who court arrest in the absence of excitement allow themselves to be arrested because of their unquenchable faith in silent but certain efficacy of suffering undergone without resentment and in a just cause. The Sikhs have been conducting the Gurdwara movement by the satyagraha method now for the last four years. Their zeal is apparently undiminished in spite of the fact that most of their leaders are in jail. Their

suffering has been intense. They have put up with beating, they have stood without retaliation shower of bullets and hundreds have been imprisoned. Victory therefore is a matter only of time. An offensive has been threatened on behalf of the Government. They are imprisoning innocent men who are marching in pursuit of a religious duty. They have declared their associations illegal. One wonders what further steps they can take to frighten the brave Sikhs. The latter's answer to any offensive on the part of the Government is not difficult to guess. They will meet each progressive step in repression with equally progressive determination to do or die.

Vykom Satyagraha

Vykom, of which till lately no one outside Travancore, at most the Madras Presidency, knew anything, has suddenly leapt to fame because it has become the seat of satyagraha. The Press contains bulletins of the daily progress of the movement from day to day. It has been undertaken in behalf of the untouchables of Travancore. The movement has given us another word to describe the condition of the suppressed classes. It is unapproachability. These poor countrymen of ours may not only not touch any other caste Hindus, but they may not even approach them within a stated distance. The leaders of the movement, with a view to remedying the evil, have taken up only a fragment of the evil, hoping no doubt that, if they deal with it successfully, they will have dealt it a death-blow at least in that part of India in which direct action is now going on. In the prosecution of the campaign some of the staunchest workers of Malabar have been imprisoned, including my predecessor, George Joseph.

As most of the leaders have been imprisoned, an appeal has been made to the leaders all over India to come to the rescue. Whether such an appeal can or should be met or not need not be considered for the moment, as Madras seems to be responding whole-heartedly. There can now be no receding. The struggle may last long if orthodox Hindu opinion is actively hostile to the movement. The satyagrahis are certain to break down the wall of prejudice no matter how strong and solid it may be if they continue firm but humble, truthful and non-violent. They must have faith enough in these qualities to know that they will melt the stoniest hearts.

How to Do It

Mr. Andrews has endeavoured to answer the query of the secretary of a Bengal Sevak Sangh as to how to combat the drink

evil.[1] His answer is to follow in the footsteps of Pussyfoot Johnson. Whilst he was trying to convert certain English students, he was stoned. The throw resulted ultimately in the loss of one eye. He pardoned the offenders, would not prosecute them and would not take compensation offered by the British Government. That was an instance of non-violence in thought, word and deed. If such non-violence can be insured here, I would not hesitate to revive the idea of picketing liquor shops again. But we stand discredited. In many places, our picketing in 1921 was far from non-violent. The political idea of embarrassing the Government was predominant with us, that of reforming the drunkard was a very secondary consideration. In the struggle of non-co-operation politics are made to subserve the moral end. If we can reform the drunkard, we reform also the administration and the administrators. Whereas, if we suppress the drunkard by force, we may deprive the Government of the liquor or the drug revenue for a time, but in the end the suppressed drinker or smoker will raise his head and the Government will raise an increased revenue. Not until we have men and women enough who would carry on picketing for the love of the drunkard even at the risk of their lives, can we dream of reviving picketing. I am afraid we ill deserve the praise given to us by Dr. Johnson. I was about to expunge the passage in question from Mr. Andrews's article before posting it. But I have retained it to remind us of our duty and spur us to effort enough to deserve such praise.

KHADDAR AND PURITY

A friend, in a letter enclosing a Rs. 10 note, writes :

> The donning of khaddar without the qualities of sincerity, purity, self-conquest, etc., amounts to a sacrilege,

and he adds that as he does not possess these qualities in their fullness, he has not the courage to wear khaddar garments. I wish it were possible to associate all these qualities with khaddar garments. But in that case very few of us will be able to use khaddar at all. The writer has needlessly exaggerated the merits of khaddar. Its one great merit is that it solves, as nothing else can, the economic problem of India and removes starvation. That alone must be all-sufficing to induce high and low to wear and use hand-spun khaddar to the exclusion of every other cloth. We want all, irrespective of their character, to wear khaddar. Scoundrels, drunkards, the very scum of the land, must clothe and feed

[1] In an article under the title "The Struggle against Alcohol"

themselves. I would not hesitate to urge them to wear khaddar even though I cannot induce them to change their mode of inner life. We must cease to attribute to khaddar virtues which it cannot carry.

Unrepentent

A correspondent has written a furiously earnest letter for publication if I thought it necessary. With due respect to the correspondent, I think it unnecessary to publish the letter. But I am prepared to let the reader guess what it is all likely to be from the following extract :

> If you will not condemn the past and present actions of the Swaraj Party in the strongest terms, then you shall fail in your duty towards Truth and thus towards God. If you will not condemn them . . . then it will mean a death-blow to your movement itself. . . . Pray do not create a second Bardoli.

I am giving the above extract in order that I may prepare the ground for my fall and thus break its force somewhat. Whatever may be the nature of the statement I may make regarding the Council-entry, I know this much that I am not going to condemn the Swarajists in any manner whatsoever. I may express my differences in the strongest language, but I cannot condemn them, because they may hold different views from mine. They and their views are at least as much entitled to a respectful hearing as mine or those of the tallest among us. There is no such thing as my movement. But in so far as any movement may be called mine, there is no danger of its failure, so long as I do not fail. Whilst, therefore, I appreciate my correspondent's anxiety for me, I would like him to feel at ease on my score. For, so far as I can foresee, there is not much danger of my proving a traitor to myself. Whilst there is yet time, I had better make another confession. I am so proud of my performance at Bardoli that there is every prospect of my repeating it. That clean confession made at a most critical moment did me a world of good. It purified me and I verily believe that it did as much good to the cause. That confession and retracing of our steps gave an object-lesson in non-violence as nothing else could have. I am, therefore, likely to repeat Bardoli as often as the occasion arises and that I shall do even at the risk of finding myself in a minority of one. I should be an unfit servant of the nation if I hesitated to tell the truth and do it for fear of losing popularity. What will it be worth when I have lost the only thing for which I live?

Young India, 17-4-1924

352. MESSAGE TO SUBURBAN DISTRICT CONFERENCE[1]

BOMBAY,
[*April 18, 1924*]

Mahatma Gandhi had sent a message that owing to his illness he was unable to take any part in their Conference, but he fully realized their great love for him. He was sure God would make their Conference a success. But what next? Most important of all their resolutions was the one about khadi, because in it women, men, children, old men, the educated and uneducated, co-operators and non-co-operators could equally take whatever part they liked. They had money and sense. Numerically they were few. Did they not think they could make them all lovers of khadi? If they could not achieve this much in their small community, where all circumstances were favourable to them, then a doubt would arise whether they were fitted to undertake even bigger tasks. He was sure that they would all come to a united resolve to see this work to a successful end.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 23-4-1924

353. LETTER TO COL. F. MELL

POST ANDHERI,
April 18, 1924

DEAR COL. MELL,

There is a prisoner in the Sabarmati Central Jail undergoing two years' rigorous imprisonment. For want of a better term he may be described as a political prisoner. His name is Mr. Kalyanji Vithalbhai Mehta. He is a co-worker of mine and I know him exceedingly well. I understand that whereas on admission his weight was 102, it is now 92, that at one time milk formed an item in his dietary, but for some cause not known to my informant, he has been deprived of milk. My informant tells me that the prisoner has been deprived also of writing materials, and that although he is able to weave only 12 yards of strapping, the authorities insist upon his finishing 20 yards. I am loath to publish this information before bringing it to your notice. At first I

[1] The Conference, held at Santa Cruz on Friday afternoon, was presided over by Darbar Gopaldas of Duassa.

thought I would write to the Superintendent directly, but finding that he would himself have to refer to you before replying to my letter, I have ventured to send this directly to you, and I shall be obliged if you will kindly let me know whether the information given to me is correct, and if it is not, what the true facts are.[1]

I am,
Yours truly,

COL. F. MELL, C.I.E., ETC.
INSPECTOR-GENERAL OF PRISONS
POONA

From a photostat : S.N. 8742

354. TELEGRAM TO VAIKOM SATYAGRAHIS[2]

[ANDHERI,
April 19, 1924]

BEING OVERWHELMED WITH WORK UNABLE WRITE. YOU ARE DOING SPLENDIDLY. CONTINUE AS YOU HAVE BEGUN.

The Hindu, 24-4-1924

355. TELEGRAM TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA[3]

[BOMBAY,
On or after *April 19, 1924*]

HOPE YOU ARE IMPROVING. PLEASE WIRE CONDITION. DO PLEASE TAKE FULL REST BEFORE MOVING.

GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 8744

[1] Col. Mell replied to this letter on April 21 and again on May 1, furnishing details about Kalyanji's health and diet, denying that he was deprived of writing materials or made to do hard labour.

[2] K. N. Namboodripad, in a letter of April 23, furnishing Gandhiji with details of developments at Vaikom and forwarding a plan of the temple and its prohibited approach roads—"a mere glance of which will reveal the inhumanity of this evil custom"—acknowledged a telegram from Gandhiji dated April 19.

[3] This was in reply to Malaviya's telegram of April 19, 1924, which read : "Sorry health does not permit going Bombay another week."

356. MY NOTES

Non-violence in Silk

A friend points out that, in the process of silk-production, innumerable silk-worms are destroyed, and asks how men and women who believe in non-violence can use it. If they cannot, he adds, the Gujarat Khadi Pracharak Mandal certainly should not undertake to popularize silk.

Here it is necessary to understand what is meant by having faith in non-violence. If a person's acceptance of non-violence is restricted to the sphere of Congress work, there can be no objection to his wearing silk, since his pledge of non-violence has reference only to the Non-co-operation movement. But those whose acceptance of non-violence is absolute cannot be too careful in their efforts to refrain from all violence. Since the world in which we live is full of violence and we see violence at every step, the believer in absolute non-violence has necessarily to live with the utmost restraints. Such a person should give up everything he can and also keep in mind that what we need to get rid of first are desire and anger. There may be greater violence in making a caustic remark than in wearing silk. Only he who has vowed to subdue his senses and has achieved some measure of success in his effort may concern himself with such subtle points. Austerity in dress and food is of value only if it is a sign of inner discipline, otherwise it is likely to be insincere. If my view is correct, there is no taint of violence in the sale of silk by the Gujarat Khadi Pracharak Mandal. Considering the matter from the point of view of non-co-operation, we have no business to concern ourselves with selling silk. If any organization connected with the Congress sells silk, its activity can perhaps be defended on the ground that it does so in order to popularize khadi. I personally see no necessity for selling silk to make khadi popular. One can, however, understand and condone the use of silk borders to beautify khadi.

Swadeshi Silk

Besides, there is very little silk made in the country. Silk thread is mostly imported. It is true that some silk thread is produced in Bangalore and a few other places, but the quantity is so small as to be negligible. Moreover, the purpose for which khadi should be popularized is not served by popularizing silk. The spread of khadi is a moral duty because people in the country

depend upon spinning for eking out a livelihood. So long as we are unable to solve the problem of our daily bread, we cannot hope to follow dharma nor to win swaraj. Where only a few thousand can earn their living by producing silk, crores can do so by spinning cotton and crores starve for want of opportunity to spin. If the silk industry went out of existence, these crores or thousands would not starve.

MEANING OF KHADI

A friend wants to know the meaning of khadi. His question is whether hand-woven *atlas*[1] made from hand-spun silk thread can be regarded as khadi. Khadi can and should have only one meaning, viz., hand-woven cloth made from hand-spun thread. Silk-thread, jute fibre and wool woven in this manner may be called, if we like, silk, jute and woollen khadi, respectively. But it would be ridiculous for anyone dressed in khadi silk to claim that he was encouraging khadi. Of course, it must be admitted that Indian silk is preferable to foreign silk. But its use cannot serve the purpose which khadi does and may even harm its cause.

ABOUT "ANTYAJAS"

Hindu society is still not free from the sin of untouchability; on the contrary, we find that all over the country people are clinging to narrow ideas. In Vykom people have gone to the extreme in this matter. But one need not go so far away from Gujarat. I ventured to do what I could to resolve the crisis which had arisen in the National School at Vile Parle. The teachers of that school want *Antyaja* children to be admitted and many members of the School Committee are also in favour of the idea. There has been considerable progress in Vile Parle in this matter. *Antyaja* friends have now asked for a separate school. In these circumstances, I offered the advice that, if the admission of *Antyaja* children just now endangered the very existence of the school, a separate school for them should be established. Misunderstanding the purpose of this suggestion, which was made in the context of, and to meet, a particular situation, managers of certain schools in Gujarat interpret it to mean that, wherever there are national schools, separate institutions should be opened for *Antyajas*. If their suggestion is acted upon, I believe both types of schools will be doomed, mainly because we cannot afford the necessary expenditure. Moreover, once we relax a principle, it will be undermined altogether and

[1] A kind of silken cloth

the blot of untouchability will remain. The advice given in special circumstances in Vile Parle cannot be followed elsewhere. As a matter of fact, it is on account of its failing in this matter that the Vile Parle school has not been affiliated to the Vidyapith.[1] The teachers and the members of the Committee are striving hard to make it fit for affiliation. The step of establishing a separate school is a part of these efforts. It is thus clear that this instance cannot be a precedent for schools which are already affiliated to the Vidyapith.

CONTRIBUTION BY "ANTYAJA" FRIENDS

Some *Antyaja* friends in Botad have sent me a sum of Rs. 36. Those who have sent this money are illiterate people. They do not read *Navajivan*, but hear it read out to them. I am being pressed to publish the names of these donors and I could not bring myself to refuse. The argument is that, unless the names are published in *Navajivan*, these illiterate friends will not know whether I have received their contribution. Accepting this argument as having some substance in it, I promised to publish the names. I hope, however, that I shall not be put under pressure to publish names of any others who may wish to send me contributions. Rather than take up the space in *Navajivan* with acknowledgments of donations, it would be better to close down the paper altogether. The right thing to do is not to hand over a contribution to a person whom one does not trust. Nor should it be given to anyone who happens to come along. We should give our contribution only to persons who are known to us and whom we can trust. We would not then care whether or not our names were published. To save space, I am leaving out the fathers' names from the list sent to me. When more than one donor has the same name, the father's name has been inserted. The following have contributed one rupee each:[2]

The following have paid 8 annas each:[3]

The following have paid 4 annas each:[4]

Vagha Ramjibhai has contributed Rs. 2 and Dudhabhai Malji Rs. 10. I prize these gifts from poor men. The amount will be used exclusively for the benefit of *Antyajas*.

[1] The Senate of this University had passed a resolution on October 31, 1920, to the effect that untouchables could not be excluded from any school approved by the University.

[2], [3] & [4] The names of contributors which follow are not reproduced here.

Meaning of Eradicating Untouchability

I observe that questions are still asked about issues which I thought had been made sufficiently plain. According to the Congress resolution and my personal opinion as well, removal of untouchability can have only one meaning. That is that we, Hindus, must rid ourselves of the sin of untouchability. The four *varnas*[1] do not regard one another's touch as defiling or sinful. We should treat *Antyajas* in the same way. It has been repeatedly stressed that the resolution has no other implication. As there is no inter-dining or intermarriage among other communities, so also we are not required by the Resolution to have such relations with *Antyajas*. There can be no compulsion in these matters. But the conduct of the person who objects to physical contact as such with another person or looks upon someone as untouchable merely because he is born in a certain community, violates Nature's law, is repugnant to the spirit of compassion and to shastra in the true sense of the word. To mix up the efforts being made to end this sinful practice with inter-dining and intermarriage is to obstruct the progress of the atonement which it is essential for us to go through. The evil of untouchability has struck such deep roots among us that we do not recognize it as evil. One would actually think that it was being carefully preserved as an ornament to the Hindu community. When well-wishers of the community find it difficult to end this evil, practical men would not introduce further difficulties and obstruct the progress of the reform.

Inter-dining and intermarriage are issues relating to reform of the caste system. Those who believe that caste should be abolished are working to bring about these reforms. But it should be clearly realized that their efforts are entirely distinct from, and have nothing whatever to do with, the eradication of untouchability. Those who wish to abolish caste also help in eradicating untouchability, and that is only right. If they understand, however, that the reforms of inter-dining and intermarriage are distinct from efforts to abolish untouchability, they will be able to judge their relative importance on merit.

What, then, is meant by the eradication of untouchability? I thought this was already clear. It means that the so-called untouchables should be as free as members of other communities to move about as they please, should be allowed to join schools and enter temples which are open to others and to draw water from the wells from which the rest draw it.

[1] Traditional divisions of Hindu society according to occupations

The argument that the untouchables are dirty in their ways and follow some unclean occupation is, to my mind, the result of ignorance. There are others dirtier than the untouchables, yet they draw water from the public wells. A nursing mother does unclean work, and so does a doctor, but we honour both. If it is said that they wash themselves after they have done their work, so do many untouchables before they go to a well to fetch water. If, however, they do not keep themselves clean, the fault is ours. To despise them, to compel them to live at a distance from the village, to make it impossible or difficult for them to gain access to the means of keeping themselves clean and then to reproach them for being unclean is the height of injustice. It is our sacred duty to help them to shake off the defects which have grown upon them owing to our negligence and our tyranny. To refuse to do this and yet to hope for India's freedom is like turning one's back towards the sun and yet hoping to get a glimpse of it.

BREACH OF PROMISE IN JHARIA

When I went to Jharia[1], accompanied by Maulana Mahomed Ali, many persons offered big sums as contribution to the Tilak Swaraj Fund. We were greatly pleased to see that Marwaris and Gujaratis living in Bihar had promised handsome contributions for the benefit of that province. They had promised that the contributions would be paid soon. Three years have passed since the promise was made. A letter has now been received from Jharia to say that many Kutchi mine-owners have not yet paid the amounts promised. I am sure everyone will be pained by this. The importance of keeping a promise is universally acclaimed in the Shastras. Progress is impossible if promises are broken every time. Families, and even entire nations, have perished as a consequence of not keeping a promise. From the ethical point of view, a one-sided promise is superior to a reciprocal one and an oral promise to a written undertaking. The promises given by these friends were voluntary and their keeping them depends solely on their own integrity. I appeal to them to honour their word. If they understand the value of a promise, they will offer twice the normal interest on the sums in question.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-4-1924

1 On February 5, 1921

357. KABULIS' TERROR

Every day in the newspapers we come across reports of the Kabulis[1] terrorizing people. We seem to have made up our minds that we have only one remedy against this harassment. If the Government does not protect us, we feel helpless.

Non-co-operators have voluntarily forsaken this avenue of redress. If a non-co-operator asks for the Government's help, his non-co-operation will be compromised, and moreover he will feel ashamed to ask for such help. But, even for those who co-operate, it is not right to beg for help from the Government. If they depend all the time on the Government to help them, there would be no Government or it would become a total dictatorship. In no other part of the world do people rely exclusively on their Government; they act on their own, as if they themselves were the authorities, to defend themselves and their honour.

What methods, then, are open to both co-operators and non-co-operators for protecting themselves from the terror of the Kabulis without appealing to the Government?

One is the commonly accepted method of fighting.

The other is the method of satyagraha.

People certainly have the right to resort to the first method. This is also their duty. If they cannot defend themselves, they will prove themselves unmanly. Even under swaraj, the Government will not be there all the time to protect the people. A Government is equipped to face serious emergencies, but can any government look after all people living in isolated spots? The very policy adopted by the present Government is such as to make it incapable of protecting the people against dangers like this terror of the Kabulis. In following that policy, it goes almost to the length of not permitting us to fight among ourselves lest we should cease to be its petty agents. It considers internal and external security of the country necessary for the protection of British commercial interests and is always ready to ensure it to the extent required by these. I do not suggest, or want people to believe, that the Government is not interested in doing anything more than this to protect the people. But its primary concern is not this and, therefore, it is not always equipped for this task.

[1] Tribesmen, hailing from the borderland between India and Afghanistan, living as petty traders or usurers

If it decides to equip itself so, it will spend, will indeed be obliged to spend, more than it does at present in the name of defence and security. As it is, we find the expenses on the gate-keeper heavier than on domestic requirements. If, now, the Government were to equip itself fully to rid the country of dangers like the Kabulis' terror, the gate-keeper would certainly have a happy time of it, but the householder would simply shiver in terror inside the house. It is, therefore, preferable that we on our own take measures to protect ourselves against such dangers. True, we are handicapped for want of arms, but more than arms what is needed is courage. What is the use of a gun in the hand of a coward? It will in all probability be used against him. A brave man unarmed will overcome an armed coward and snatch away the latter's gun before he can use it. If stout-hearted men in every town or village come forward to protect the people at any cost to themselves, the harassment by the Kabulis will soon be curbed. It needs to be mentioned here that the pledge of non-violent non-co-operation does not forbid self-defence in this manner.

Would I, then, help such an effort? If asked this question, I would have to reply in the negative. I think I have courage enough. Without it one cannot be a satyagrahi. A coward cannot adopt satyagraha as his dharma. That he may do so out of fear is another matter. But I cannot ride two horses at a time. Ever advancing on the path of satyagraha, I wish to become an image of Truth, wish my whole being to be filled with Truth. I have, therefore, deliberately renounced the path of living by killing others. I wish to learn, and act upon, the *mantra* of dying to live. I should like to live only through the world's love. Anyone who regards me as his enemy may kill my body this very moment. It is ever my prayer that, even at such a moment, there should be nothing but love in my heart. Following this path that I do, I cannot help, do not wish to help, any effort of self-defence through using force.

Thus, for me and for others like me, only the second method remains. This method does not require large numbers. It does not permit mass satyagraha. The Shastras promise that, if there is even one self-controlled person among us, he can touch even a Kabuli's heart. A true Muslim fakir can do this with ease, but it is not impossible for a Hindu sannyasi, either, to succeed. The principle of satyagraha recognizes no distinctions of community or creed. In the ultimate perfection of satyagraha, even speech is superfluous. The heart goes on doing its work then.

What was accomplished in Gujarat by one person, Sahajanand[1], could not be accomplished by the power of the State. What was achieved by Chaitanya[2] in Bengal has not been possible till now, and will never be possible, for the Government to achieve. The very presence of Chaitanya had a power under the effect of which dacoits and robbers changed their ways. There have been many such examples of Muslim fakirs and Hindu sannyasis in our country. The power of Abdul Kadar Jillani's truthfulness made dacoits return what they had seized from him and give up their criminal ways. If there are any fearless and self-controlled men among the mendicants and ascetics of Gujarat, they can easily save the people from this terror of the Kabulis. The Age of Sahajananda has not come to an end. It is only devotion and self-control like his that are wanted. In these days, even a little less of devotion and self-control will pay, for a patient responds to even a small dose of a medicine which he has never had before.

Of course, some people are bound to comment: "Why not yourself be what you advise others to be? The purpose will be served if you become an ascetic yourself." This, too, is right. If people do not understand my excuse, I cannot explain it by putting it in words. Nor is this article addressed to those who are likely to ask this question. May it not be that I do not have the strength of heart to act upon what my intellect tells me is entirely possible ? I claim no monopoly of such strength. There are likely to be many in Gujarat with much greater strength of heart than I possess. My appeal is addressed to them.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-4-1924

358. *MY FOLLOWERS*

A friend has sent me a report of a meeting in which he says:[3]

Neither the person who writes about this incident nor the gentleman who made the speech realizes that I have only one follower and that is myself. It is difficult enough to control one;

[1] Swami Sahajanand (1781-1830); founder of the Swaminarayana sect

[2] Sixteenth-century Hindu religious reformer who taught that caste was subordinate to faith in Lord Krishna

[3] Not given here. The report mentions a statement made by the Chairman that a certain respectable gentleman almost compelled him to become Gandhiji's follower.

why, then, think of having more? This follower of mine sometimes plays such antics that I am quite unnerved. But my principles are so liberal that, taking compassion on him, I let him off every time and coax him to go forward. My efforts are even rewarded with some measure of success. But until I achieve complete success, what is the use of collecting more followers? I do not expect perfection from the addition of one imperfection to another. When I have made myself a perfect disciple, I shall not be ashamed or afraid to invite the whole world to follow me and the world too will willingly do so. At present, I am only in search of co-workers in my experiments. They and I are known as satyagrahis. I am a conscientious follower of Truth, and I have hope and faith that God will give me the strength to pass Truth's ultimate test. I am no paragon of Truth. For the present, that is a state as unapproachable for me as the top of the Dhavalgiri. To reach it is by no means easy. Any success which can be set down to my credit should be regarded as success on the way. Such success sustains a satyagrahi and inspires him with hope. When he has attained to perfection in Truth, he will be enthroned in the hearts of crores. I have no doubt of this.

If, therefore, the Chairman of the meeting (referred to in the report) joins me as a co-worker, I shall be completely satisfied. This gentleman has taken a great responsibility upon himself. I have briefly suggested in an article[1] on caste reform last week the qualifications required of one who would offer satyagraha. I would suggest that the Chairman and others ponder on what I have said.

Satyagraha is an immutable law. We are now applying it to a new field. Till now, its application has been confined to individual family relationships. We have enlarged the scope of its application and have also moved from the individual to the mass. I have realized from numerous experiments that its extension in both respects is possible. But, on each occasion, the leader more or less possessed the qualifications described in the last issue and the soldiers were sincere, and thus the conditions relating to them were fulfilled. Our experience in Bardoli taught us that, even with an able leader, only failure could result if the soldiers were not sincere. At Borsad, we witnessed a combination of able leadership and sincere following.[2] The mistaken notion that, on every occasion of satyagraha, I must either lead or at least be pre-

[1] *Vide* "Satyagraha and Caste Reform", 13-4-1924.

[2] During the satyagraha campaign of 1923-24

sent in person to give my advice, was effectively dispelled. It must never be forgotten that there has to be a combination of three factors for a successful satyagraha campaign—an able and gifted leader, sincere followers and a pure aim.

The observations of the Chairman on this occasion referred to the proposed satyagraha in an Indian State. It is, therefore, necessary to discuss the necessity of resorting to satyagraha in the States. Rajput agriculturists of Bijolia in Udaipur State started satyagraha and won complete victory. A satyagraha campaign is in progress at present at Vykom in Travancore State. In neither instance does the Congress come into the picture, and rightly so. It is, I believe, an accepted principle that the Congress should not conduct or advise a satyagraha campaign in Indian States. This is only correct. The aim of the Congress is swaraj for British India. If, therefore, it associates itself with satyagraha in other areas, it would be transgressing its self-imposed limits. When the Congress has won its goal, the problem of the States will have been automatically solved. On the other hand, if people win swaraj in any Indian State, this will have little effect on British India. Hence, every person working in Indian States should be clear in his mind that no help can be expected from the Congress in the satyagraha campaigns in Indian States.

This restriction does not, however, prevent individual members of the Congress from taking part in such campaigns. Various activities are being carried on at present outside the Congress, and its members give their services to them. The other rule that applies to all voluntary workers also applies to members of the Congress. It is that a Congress worker must not take up any new task to the detriment of the work he is doing for it. It has become a tradition in our country for one person to take upon himself more tasks than he can manage, with the result that all the tasks suffer more or less.

There is, in movements like this, a serious danger that leaders, in their zeal and enthusiasm, may throw themselves into them without due reflection, and then lose heart and give up the struggle when they do not get enough workers. Before starting any movement, it is essential to assess the extent of the support likely to be extended by the people. The enthusiasm of a handful of youths is not sufficient to sustain a big campaign. Where the people are not ready, it is harmful from every point of view to start any movement on their behalf. Anyone who is so moved may light a fire and purify himself by sacrificing himself in it. He must feel neither anger nor hatred. He will immolate himself in this manner for the joy of doing so and not with any philanthropic motives. He

would be miserable if he did not throw himself into such a fire. Such sacrifices also are needed, and every person has a right to sacrifice himself. Many great achievements in this world have been the result of such individual sacrifices.

But where mass satyagraha is concerned, individual zeal must be effectively restrained. On such occasions, people need enthusiasm, patience and the strength to suffer. They will fail if they are enthusiastic but lose heart when success is not easily forthcoming. If they do not have the strength to suffer, they will get exhausted when the authorities employ more repression than they had expected. Leaders, therefore, should consider all these points before planning a struggle.

There is one other matter that must also be kept in mind. There is a common tendency to assume that the authorities will surely not go beyond a certain limit. But there is no basis for such an assumption. For the authorities it is simply their duty to suppress opposition. When they cannot concede the people's demands, they regard it as their job to put down the people by every possible means. It is sheer naivete to imagine that they will refrain, out of kindness, from harassing the people too much. It was because of such naïveté that the satyagrahis in Vykom believed that the Raja of Travancore would not arrest their leader. Why should the Raja not arrest him? Does the Raja want to assist satyagraha? If a movement can be suppressed by arresting its leader and if it is right to suppress it, it is perfectly right to arrest the leader at the very start. Then the poor followers will be spared suffering. If they are strong enough to take the place of the leader, they will welcome his imprisonment. If the authorities do not arrest the leader, it is in the belief that doing so would only strengthen the movement. One should, therefore, start a movement with a clear realization that the Raja will resort to the severest measures to suppress the movement.

If all these points are carefully considered and we can be confident of the foregoing conditions being fulfilled, satyagraha can be employed in any circumstances and the result will always be good.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 20-4-1924

359. COW-PROTECTION

The issue of cow-protection is intimately connected with the problem of Hindu-Muslim unity. But we will not consider it today from this point of view. There is much that I want to write about Hindu-Muslim unity and its bearing on the issue of cow-protection. But that can wait. Nor will we consider the question from the religious point of view. We shall discuss it exclusively from the economic stand-point.

I wish only to place before my readers some of my experiences during my stay here in the quiet of Juhu and the old ideas of mine that they revived. I have invited some persons who live with me or have been brought up by me or have been close to me, persons who have been ill for some time, to share with me the benefits of change of air. Their diet is mainly cow's milk. We found it rather difficult to obtain it here. There are in the vicinity three suburbs of Bombay, viz., Vile Parle, Andheri and Santa Cruz. Cow's milk was very difficult to obtain from any of these places. Buffalo's milk was plentiful. But even that could be had without adulteration only because of friends in the neighbourhood who are solicitous about my needs. Otherwise, pure milk of even buffaloes would be hard to come by. Ultimately, through God's grace and the kindness of friends, I could even get cow's milk. My friends tell me that they send me what they can spare, but I fear that I am, in fact, depriving them of what they need. Not everyone, however, may be as fortunate as I am. Though I persuade myself that I live like a beggar, there is no convenience that I do not enjoy. How far I deserve the unbounded love of my friends will only be known if some person, in his kindness, makes up an honest account after my death.

But this non-availability of cow's milk has again set me thinking. In India, a country in which live countless people whose religion enjoins love for all living creatures, where there are crores of zealous Hindus who venerate the cow as mother, how is it that it is only here in India that cows are in a wretched condition, that their milk is scarce, that such milk as is available is adulterated, and that milk of any sort is beyond the reach of the poor? For this, neither the Muslims nor British Rule can be blamed. If anyone is at fault, it is the Hindus, and even their indifference is not deliberate but the result of ignorance.

There are *goshalas* in every part of the country and they are all in a pitiable state. Here, too, the cause is simple inefficiency. Enormous sums are spent on these *goshalas* or *pinjrapoles*[1]. Some people say that this stream is also drying up. Be it so. I am convinced nonetheless that, if these institutions are established on a sound footing, devoted Hindus will pour out money to help them. I am sure that the task is not impossible.

Pinjrapoles should be located on extensive grounds outside the city. They should house not only aged animals but milch cattle as well, so that pure milk needed by the city could be supplied from them. Many people who do not know me have often misrepresented me, and amused me too, by saying that I am against machines. I promise not to raise my "Mahatma's" voice against any machines that may be required for these milk centres. I will be, on the contrary, ready to lend them my humble support. If no Indian can be found to administer such a centre, I shall be entirely willing to have an Englishman appointed to that post. If in this way we can convert a *pinjrapole* into a milk centre, breed the best cattle and sell milk and butter at low prices, thousands of animals will be made happy and poor people and children will get pure ghee cheap. Eventually, every such *goshala* will become self-supporting or nearly so. If this experiment is tried in even one *goshala*, it will be possible to test the practicability of my scheme.

I hope that no one will raise the question: "But how does religion come into this? Is it not trade?" If there is any such sceptical reader, I would tell him that religion and affairs of practical life need not be mutually exclusive. When a certain practice is found to be contrary to religion, it should be abandoned. Religion, too, is truly tested only when it is followed in daily life. It demands more than ordinary efficiency, for without discrimination, thoughtfulness and other like qualities, religion cannot be followed in practice at all. At the present day, many rich people who are totally engrossed in the pursuit of wealth contribute, in their simple-mindedness, to all manner of funds without giving any thought to the matter. Those in charge of the management of the institutions which become the victims of such contributions run them in an unimaginative way and we then proceed to give them our support. Thus, all the three parties deceive themselves and believe that they are doing good. The truth is that what is thus done in the name of dharma is often the very opposite of dharma. If these three parties use their discretion and understand dharma pro-

[1] Institutions for care of old and infirm cattle

perly and follow it, or even if one party does so, every institution will breathe the true spirit of dharma.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-4-1924

360. TELEGRAM TO K. M. PANIKKAR

[On or after *April 21, 1924*][1]

DOUBT ADVISABILITY FREE KITCHENS. WRITING.

From a photostat : S.N. 10288

361. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

Wednesday [*April 23, 1924*][2]

BHAISHRI MAHADEV,

Herewith some Gujarati material. Vallabhbhai has passed on to me the bundle you sent through him. However, I am not taking anything from it this time. Your description of [the incident in] Visnagar is beautiful from the point of view of language. From the point of view of the contents, it is enough to bring tears to one's eyes. But I have made my heart as hard as stone. As physical objects, we are more insignificant on this earth than even the ant. To us the latter seems as of no account. And what are we in the eyes of the Lord of the Universe? How, then, can we, mere insects, rejoice or weep at anything?

A Muslim gentleman has addressed an open letter to me through the *Prajamitra*. It is, of course, full of venom, but contains a fine piece of advice: "If you cannot promote harmony between the two communities, please keep quiet and watch the game like an onlooker." Please go through my article, "Mari Bhasha", first[3]. You know, I am sure, who the dweller on the peak is. With what laborious care has Valji read *Navajivan*! Many of his corrections put us all to shame. I would certainly hold you responsible for those mistakes if you regularly went through *Navajivan* articles

[1] This was in reply to a telegram from K. M. Panikkar received on April 21, which read : Shiromani Committee has decided open free kitchen. Vaikom Jatha leaving early. Hope approve.

[2] The article "Mari Bhasha" mentioned in the letter appeared in *Navajivan*, 27-4-1924. The Wednesday preceding this date fell on April 23.

[3] Presumably, before it was printed in *Navajivan*.

before they were printed. However, I have an impression that you had not read them. You saw them only after they were printed. Who, then, had read them? If it was not Swami Anand either, whom should I hold responsible? The children? If, indeed, we cannot correct glaring mistakes of language, have we any right to run *Navajivan*? I myself am not yet in a position to go carefully through everything I write, and that, too, from the point of view of language. And if you or Swami do not take the responsibility of going through the matter carefully, I would not hesitate even to stop publishing *Navajivan*. A person who cannot do his work to his own satisfaction had better leave it alone. It is his duty to do so.

I would very much like to write on other subjects, but, for the present, I must content myself with what little will serve our purpose. One of you two should carefully go through the material sent this time.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I have used the word *vicharmanyata* for "creed". Please replace it by a better word if you can think of one.

Why should anyone there feel worried about Radha? She is all right now. Show this to Swami.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 8760

362. SOME REMARKS

[On or after *April 23, 1924*][1]

How dare they elect the President?

I can give my opinion only after I have discussed the matter with Vallabhbhai.

Let them postpone the meeting.

How can even a wire reach them now?

Knowing this, we need not send any and let them do what they think best.

If they have nothing in particular to do and if they do not like to remain idle, they have the spinning-wheel to keep them busy.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5730

[1] The remarks were scribbled by Gandhiji on a telegram dated April 23, 1924, received by Vallabhbhai Patel from Balwantrai Mehta, reading : "Devchandbhai wires postponement Committee. Wire final instructions."

363. NOTES

VYKOM SATYAGRAHA

The anti-untouchability campaign at Vykom is providing an interesting study in satyagraha and, as it is being conducted in a calm spirit, it must prove of great use for future workers along similar lines. The Travancore authorities, whilst they still remain unbending regarding the prohibition order, are carrying out their purpose in a courteous manner. The public already know how quickly the authorities tried to check violence against satyagrahis. The treatment in the jails too is in keeping with their conduct in the open. Here is what Mr. Menon[1] writes from Trivandrum Jail:

> The expected has happened. I am now within the walls of the Trivandrum Central Jail along with my friend Mr. Madhavan. We are treated as State prisoners. A separate block is set apart for our use. We are allowed our own clothes. A convict cooks for us. I am having the same food as I take at home. So is my friend Mr. Madhavan. Books and newspapers are also allowed. Of course, in writing letters we are not allowed to say anything about the Vykom affair. Friends can see us between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. every day except Sunday.
>
> I am sure that you would be glad to hear that the Superintendent and other authorities of the Jail are doing everything to make us comfortable. We receive from them the same polite treatment as we received from the Police officers at Vykom.

The Travancore Jail authorities deserve to be congratulated upon their considerate treatment of the satyagrahi prisoners. Let us hope on either side the present self-restraint and courteous conduct will be continued to the end.

WHY PETITION?

Surprise has been expressed over the advice I have tendered to the satyagrahis that, whilst satyagraha continues, the organizers should leave no stone unturned by way of petitions, public meetings, deputations, etc., in order to engage the support of the State and public opinion on their side. The critics argue that I am partial to the State authorities because they represent Indian rule,

[1] Presumably, K.P. Kesava Menon, Secretary of the Kerala Congress Committee

whereas I am hostile to the British authorities because they represent an alien rule. For me every ruler is alien that defies public opinion. In South Africa, Indians continued to negotiate with the authorities up to the last moment even though satyagraha was going on. In British India, we are non-co-operating and we are doing so because we are bent on mending or ending the whole system of Government and, therefore, the method of petition is a hopeless effort.

In Travancore, the satyagrahis are not attacking a whole system. They are not attacking it at any point at all. They are fighting sacerdotal prejudice. The Travancore State comes in by a side door as it were. Satyagrahis would, therefore, be deviating from their path if they did not try to court junction with the authorities and cultivate public support by means of deputations, meetings, etc. Direct action does not always preclude other consistent methods. Nor is petitioning, etc., in every case a sign of weakness on the part of a satyagrahi. Indeed, he is no satyagrahi who is not humble.

Some Implications

I have been also asked to develop the argument against sending aid apart from public sympathy from outside Travancore. I have already stated the utilitarian argument in an interview.[1] But there is a root objection too to getting, indeed even accepting, such support. Satyagraha is either offered by a few self-sacrificing persons in the name of the many weak, or by very few in the face of enormous odds. In the former case, which is the case in Vykom, many are willing but weak, and a few are willing and capable of sacrificing their all for the cause of the untouchables. In such a case, it is obvious they need no aid whatsoever. But suppose that they took outside aid, how would it serve the untouchable countrymen? The weak Hindus, in the absence of strong ones rising in their midst, will not prevail against the strong opponents. The sacrifice of helpers from other parts of India will not convert the opponents and it is highly likely that the last state of the untouchables will be worse than the first. Let it be remembered that satyagraha is a most powerful process of conversion. It is an appeal to the heart. Such an appeal cannot be successfully made by people from other parts of India flocking to Vykom.

Nor should a campaign conducted from within need outside monetary support. All the weak but sympathetic Hindus of Travancore may not court arrest and other suffering, but they can and

[1] *Vide* "Interview to *The Hindu*", 15-4-1924.

should render such pecuniary assistance as may be needed. I could not understand their sympathy without such support.

In the case, too, of a very few offering satyagraha against heavy odds, outside support is not permissible. Public satyagraha is an extension of private or domestic satyagraha. Every instance of public satyagraha should be tested by imagining a parallel domestic case. Thus, suppose in my family I wish to remove the curse of untouchability. Suppose further that my parents oppose the view, that I have the fire of the conviction of Prahlad, that my father threatens penalties, calls in even the assistance of the State to punish me. What should I do? May I invite my friends to suffer with me the penalties my father has devised for me? Or is it not up to me meekly to bear all the penalties my father inflicts on me and absolutely rely on the law of suffering and love to melt his heart and open his eyes to the evil of untouchability? It is open to me to bring in the assistance of learned men, the friends of the family, to explain to my father what he may not understand from me, his child. But I may allow no one to share with me the privilege and the duty of suffering. What is true of this supposed case of domestic satyagraha is equally true and no less of the case we have imagined of public satyagraha. Whether, therefore, the Vykom satyagrahis represent a hopeless minority or, as I have been informed, a majority of the Hindus concerned, it is clear that they should avoid aid from outside save that of public sympathy. That, in every such case, we may not be able to conform to the law, that in the present case too, we may not be able to do so may be true. Let us not, however, forget the law and let us conform to it as far as ever we can.

Case of Chirala Perala

Let me quote one case in which I had the honour of advising. I refer to the case of Chirala Perala.[1] The citizens' claim was that they were a united body and prepared to suffer. What I witnessed was a wonderful exhibition of cohesion, courage and extremely able and daring leadership. I said that I could not advise the Congress or the public to give pecuniary support. I could not advise the Congress even to encourage them by passing resolutions. If they won, the Congress would claim credit for the success of the means adopted by it. If they failed, the Congress will share no discredit. The people understood and accepted the advice. Even after three years' careful consideration, I have no reason to revise

[1] *Vide* Vol. XXI, pp. 16-8.

the advice then tendered. On the contrary, I feel sure that, if we are to grow to our full height, we shall do so only by punctiliously observing the laws of the game.

To Work

The Karnatak Provincial Congress Committee has met and amicably settled its differences about the venue. The resolution admits defective election procedure and then confirms the former decision to hold the Congress at Belgaum. I tender my congratulations to the Committee on having performed a purificatory act. To err is human only when we are ready to admit errors. Persistence in error after discovery is very much less than human. Karnatak has a great task before her. Will she be able to show the highest record in the constructive programme? I have little doubt that she will. The question however should be, will she show the volume of constructive work such as to enable her to offer civil disobedience? She has the Brahmin and non-Brahmin problem. If Karnatak was India, can she shoulder the burden of full self-government with the Brahmins and non-Brahmins distrusting each other? I know that one party at least must surrender all to win all. If each wants to bargain with the other, it becomes a miniature edition of the Hindu-Muslim problem. The only way to solve these knotty problems is for each party to regard the interest of the other as its own. Then the knot is unloosed without effort. The unresisting will solve the knot even as in undoing a material knot we take the most unresisting thread first. If the volunteers and workers vie with one another in serving, if the Brahmin bends to the non-Brahmin and *vice versa*, they will clothe the whole of Karnatak in khadi, they will show national schools teaching under one roof Brahmin, non-Brahmin, untouchable, Mussalman and all other creeds, boys and girls. They will provide the way to Hindu-Muslim unity and thus show the real way to swaraj. Thus, for Karnatak sincerely and lastingly to solve the Brahmin-non-Brahmin problem is to solve all her other problems and thereby largely India's also.

A Study in Philanthropy

We have been accustomed so much to the charge against the Indian settlers in Kenya that, as they do not care for the native interest, their immigration should be restricted in the interest of the natives. Up to now I have not heard a single statement to the effect that the Indian settlers have done any harm to them. They do not pretend to go as philanthropists and, therefore, they do not establish schools for the natives nor do they do any mis-

sionary work among them. But, as the Indian trade is not imposed upon the natives, their very presence, I make bold to say, has a certain civilizing influence upon the natives.

But the question naturally arises: is the presence of the European detractors of Indians beneficial to the natives? Mr. Andrews in his terrible indictment of the British policy in Kenya gives a conclusive answer.[1] It is a study in modern philanthropy. Mr. Andrews' indictment shows the meaning of the 'White Man's Burden'. *The Times of India* has severe strictures upon Mr. Andrews' article on the liquor question and has challenged the accuracy of his statements. His 'White Man's Trust' is more full of facts and figures than his previous article. Mr. Andrews knows what he writes. He is a student of history. He is the readiest man I know to admit mistakes if he finds he has made any. And I know from close experience how few have been his mistakes in spite of his voluminous writings. I am surprised that *The Times of India* writer has without sufficient knowledge challenged the accuracy of Mr. Andrews' figures. Anyway, I present another set of figures from Mr. Andrews' pen for challenge if that is possible, otherwise, for serious and humble reflection in the interest of humanity. The late Cecil Rhodes[2] years ago tore the mask of hypocrisy when he described certain policies by the phrase, unctuous rectitude. But it is a vice that has persisted in spite of the great man. He sinned often enough, but he was great and good enough not to hide his sins. The British policy in Kenya is a continuous attempt to hide the sin of the fearful exploitation of the innocent Africans.

Mr. Pennington on the War-path

Mr. Pennington sent the following letter to my predecessor from France :

> As a very old official of the Indian Government, I read *Young India* very carefully to see how you propose to govern the country when you have succeeded in making British Rule impossible. You will perhaps admit that we British think we have a duty to perform in India, by way of keeping the peace both internally and externally, and that we should not be justified in handing it over, except to something like a possible Government. I have the greatest respect for Mr. Gandhi and many other "Swarajists", but do you honestly think that any Government he could form could govern that enormous country without a backing of British bayonets?

[1] The article "The White Man's Burden", was published in *Young India*, 24-4-1924.

[2] 1853-1902; Premier of the Cape Colony, 1890-96

If the Swarajists could have shown that they could manage affairs even tolerably under Mr. Montagu's scheme for the short period of 10 years, it might have been possible to frame some sort of Colonial scheme that would work; but, so far, they have only shown how to make anything like representative Government quite impossible, and so proved the greater fitness of the old system in the present state of the country. It may be necessary therefore to try some other plan perhaps by further Indianization of the old system, as suggested many years ago by Mr. Donald Smeaton. The King's Government must be carried on even if Diarchy has to be scrapped.

I am glad to be able to renew acquaintance with Mr. J. B. Pennington. The answer to his query is incredibly simple. If India succeeds in making British *Rule* impossible without matching the British bayonet with another bayonet, she will rule herself too with the same means. But if it is an unalterable law that the rule of one bayonet can only be displaced by another of equal or greater strength, then I see no present prospect of making British Rule impossible. I must admit, as my correspondent will have me to, that British people think that they have a duty to perform in India, but I may be permitted to add that we Indians think that their duty is not to *impose* peace upon us when we are longing to war against one another, but to lift their oppressive weight from over our heads. We think that we are sinking beneath that weight.

Young India, 24-4-1924

364. FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

To THE EDITOR, *Young India*

SIR,

While commenting on the Tibbya College incident in the *Young India* on the 10th April you write[1]: "The Muslim student who took exception to the comparison was after all justified in so doing." I do not know what exactly happened in the Tibbya College on the day of the celebration of Mr. Gandhi's birthday, but accepting what Dr. Ansari writes as the true version of the incident, I feel it is difficult to agree with you in your comment. No harm seems to have been meant or done to anyone when Mr. Gandhi was compared to Jesus Christ. It may not be necessary for the purpose of honouring a man, as you write, to compare him with revered prophets, but at times to bring home to the audi-

[1] *Vide* "Campaign of Misrepresentation", 10-4-1924.

ence or the public the greatness of an individual, comparison with other honoured men or revered prophets is neither unnatural nor unbecoming. Mr. Andrews has on many occasions declared Mr. Gandhi to be a true picture of Jesus Christ. It is quite possible that the person compared may not be worthy of a place of equality with revered prophets. That is quite a different matter. But how can one justifiably take exception to the principle of comparison itself? The Muslim student in the Tibbya College might be considering Mr. Gandhi to be unworthy of comparison with Jesus Christ; if so, he was quite welcome to hold his view and to declare it before the audience, as the Hindu student should have been welcome to hold his. We can understand such a difference of opinion. No one has a quarrel with it. But here the case was quite different. It was not that the Muslim student disagreed with the Hindu student in the latter's estimate of Mr. Gandhi's worth when he compared him with Jesus Christ, but that he objected to such a comparison itself, observing that no living person, *however eminent in all respects*, should be compared to prophets. One fails to understand how such an objection can be held to be justifiable. Previous prophets were human beings and the like of them may now be amongst us and are sure to come hereafter. What harm is there if comparisons are made of living saints or great men whom some may consider to be prophets with those that have gone before? Intellectually, ethically or spiritually, there is nothing wrong in doing so.

A person compared to previous prophets may out of modesty disclaim such a comparison, but that is beside the issue. I think, therefore, that to hold the Muslim student's objection as justifiable is to curtail the freedom of expression and to indirectly encourage the prevailing spirit of intolerance which, I am sure, is very far from what you desire.

I am, etc.,
GHANASHYAM JETHANAND

HIRABAD,
HYDERABAD (SIND)

I fear I must adhere to the opinion I have expressed to which Mr. Ghanashyam takes exception. It was not out of false modesty that I gave it. If I felt shy or awkward, I might not have noticed the incident, but I would not even out of modesty, false or otherwise, mislead the reader and thus deviate from the ethics of journalism which requires a fearless expression of true opinion. It will not be denied that to say what offends another is against ethics and certainly against spirituality if the saying is not required in the interest of truth. I hardly think it can be argued that it was in the interest of truth to make the comparison referred to. Whilst I think that such comparisons are undesirable, I admit

that to object to them when they are actually made may be a mark of intolerance. But the Muslim student, knowing how it wounded many Mussalmans, rightly objected. He showed his good sense by apologizing when his objection offended the Hindu student. We would but feed the fire of intolerance if we insist, in the name of freedom of opinion, on expressing those opinions which are likely to wound some. I may inform Mr. Ghanashyam that, shortly before I was in prison, a devout Hindu wrote a letter strongly protesting against my being compared to Krishna and Rama. I certainly agreed with my correspondent that such comparisons should not be made. I can fully sympathize with orthodox Vaishnavas feeling offended at comparisons which outrage their religious sense. What I plead for is extreme and delicate consideration for the feelings and susceptibilities of others. If, in the name of tolerance, we began to swear at one another's deities, we would be copying the fabled economist who killed the goose that laid the golden eggs.

Young India, 24-4-1924

365. *WHAT IS HINDUISM?*

A dear friend sends me a letter[1] (published elsewhere) gently criticizing the manner of my defence of Maulana Mahomed Ali's now famous speech regarding his comparison of creeds. The friend says that I have not been fair to Hinduism in that I have said a Hindu will fare no better than the Maulana. He quarrels with my illustration about marriage and then goes on to show the beauties of Hinduism. Another friend, too, has made a similar remonstrance and added that many others share his opinion.

These friends have, in my opinion, mixed up the question of propriety of comparing creeds with that of the allocation of their respective merits. Indeed, in arguing that Hinduism is not like Islam and that a Hindu could not think like the Maulana, the friends themselves have subscribed to the Maulana's argument that it is not only perfectly correct, but it is the logical outcome of one's preferring a particular belief to every other, that for oneself that particular belief, though held by a bad man, is superior to that of another howsoever saintly. I adhere to the marriage illustration chosen by me, though I now see that it would have been better for

[1] This was published under the title "The Ambiguous Middle".

me to have avoided it. It is not a conclusive illustration. There are, I admit with my critics, many reasons for confining the choice of a husband to a particular class. But I do claim that the predominant reason for excluding the best man if he happens to belong, as he often does, to another class or caste is his creed. A Brahmin parent chooses a Brahmin as a husband for his daughter because he prefers the general body of opinion, which may be called creed, held by his clan. Underlying the preference is no doubt the belief that acceptance of a creed ultimately involves practice in accordance with it. A narrow creed, if it is honestly believed, has necessarily a limited field for practice. A creed, for instance, that makes it obligatory to offer human sacrifice will never free the believer from the taint of religious murder unless he gives up the creed. Thus it is that we find people otherwise most moral disappointing us when they fall short of the highest because of their narrow creed. Many sincere and otherwise noble-minded Hindus consider untouchability as a part of the Hindu creed and would, therefore, regard the reformers as outcastes. If untouchability was a part of the Hindu creed, I should decline to call myself a Hindu and most decidedly embrace some other faith if it satisfied my highest aspirations. Fortunately for me, I hold that untouchability is no part of Hinduism. On the contrary, it is a serious blot upon it, which every lover of it must sacrifice himself to remove. Suppose, however, I discover that untouchability was really an integral part of Hinduism, I should have to wander in the wilderness because the other creeds, as I know them through their accepted interpreters, would not satisfy my highest aspirations.

My correspondent accuses me of the crime of using the ambiguous middle in that I have confused Truth and non-violence with the Hindu creed. The crime is deliberate. It is the good fortune or the misfortune of Hinduism that it has no official creed. In order, therefore, to protect myself against any misunderstanding, I have said Truth and non-violence is my creed. If I were asked to define the Hindu creed, I should simply say: search after Truth through non-violent means. A man may not believe even in God and still call himself a Hindu. Hinduism is a relentless pursuit after truth and, if today it has become moribund, inactive, irresponsive to growth, it is because we are fatigued, and as soon as the fatigue is over, Hinduism will burst forth upon the world with a brilliance perhaps unknown before. Of course, therefore, Hinduism is the most tolerant of all religions. Its creed is all-embracing. But to claim that is to claim superiority for the Hindu creed over all the other creeds of the world. As I write these lines, I feel a

crowd of sectarians whispering to me, "That is no Hinduism you are defining, come to us and we will show you the Truth." I am confounding all these whisperers by saying 'नेति नेति,' 'not that, my friends, not that,' and they make confusion worse confounded by retorting with redoubled fury, 'not that, not that.' But still another voice whispers to me, "Why all this duelling—this war of words? I can show you a way out of it. It lies through silent prayer." For the moment I propose to listen to that voice and observe silence and ask my friends to do likewise. Possibly I have failed to convince them and their co-sharers in their opinion. If I have failed to convince, it is because I have not seen the light. I can give my assurance that I have not indulged in special pleading in order to defend Maulana Mahomed Ali. If I discover my error, I hope I shall have the courage to own it. The Maulana needs no defence from me. And I should be a false friend if, in order to defend him, I sacrificed an iota of truth. It is the special privilege of a friend to own the other's faults and redeclare his affection in spite of faults.

Young India, 24-4-1924

366. *MY JAIL EXPERIENCES-II*

Some Officials

It was on Saturday the 18th March that the trial was finished. We were looking forward to a quiet time in the Sabarmati Jail at least for some weeks. We had expected that the Government would not let us remain in that jail for any length of time. We were, however, not prepared for the very sudden removal that actually did take place. For, the reader may recall that we were removed on Monday the 20th March to a special train which was to take us to the Yeravda Central Jail. We were made aware of the proposed removal only about an hour before departure. The officer-in-charge was all politeness and we were enabled to feel perfectly comfortable on the journey. But, immediately on alighting at Kirkee, we observed the difference and were made to feel that we were prisoners after all. The Collector and two others were awaiting the train. We were put in a motor prison-van which had perforations for ventilators. But for its hideous appearance, it could well be a pardah motor. Certainly, we could see nothing of the outside world. For the story of our reception at the Jail, the tearing away of Mr. Banker from me, his restoration, the first interview, and kindred interesting details, I must refer the reader to my

letter[1] to Hakimji Ajmal Khan Saheb, already published in these columns. After the first unpleasantness, the relations between the then Superintendent, Col. Dalziel, and ourselves rapidly improved. He was most considerate regarding our creature comforts. But there was a certain something about him which always jarred. He would never forget that he was Superintendent and we were prisoners. He would not let it be granted that we were fully aware that we were prisoners and he was Superintendent. I made bold to say that we never once forgot that we were prisoners. We showed him all the deference due to his rank. The reminders were so unnecessary. But he had the needlessly haughty demeanour which one often regretfully notices about so many British officials. This weakness of his made him distrustful of the prisoners. Let me give a pleasant illustration of what I mean. He was most anxious that I should eat more than I was taking. He wanted me to take butter. I told him I could take only goat's milk butter. He gave special orders that it should be procured at once. Well, it came. The difficulty was what to mix it with. I suggested that some flour might be issued to me. It was given. But it was too coarse for my very delicate digestive apparatus. Refined mill flour was ordered and 20 lbs. was issued to me. What was I to do with all this? I cooked or Mr. Banker cooked for me chapatis. After some trial, I felt I needed neither flour nor butter. I asked that the flour may be removed from me and the issue of butter stopped. Col. Dalziel would not listen. What was issued was issued. I might feel tempted later. I pleaded that it was all waste of public money. I gently suggested that I was as solicitous about the use of public money as I would be about my own. There was an incredulous smile. I then said, "Surely, it is my money." "How much have you contributed to the public treasury?" was the quick retort. I humbly replied, "You contribute only a percentage out of the salary you get from the State, whereas I give the whole of myself, labour, intelligence and all." There was a loud burst of suggestive laughter. But I did not collapse for I believed what I said. A labourer like me who labours for the State for mere maintenance contributes more to the State than a Viceroy who receives Rs. 20,000 together with royal residencies and contributes to the State, if his salary be not income-tax-free, a certain percentage of his salary. It becomes possible for him and those who belong to the system of which he is the chief to receive what he does out of the labour of millions. And yet many Englishmen and some

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Hakim Ajmal Khan", 14-4-1922.

Indians honestly believe that they serve the State (whatever the word may mean to them) more than the labourers and, in addition, contribute from their very salaries a percentage towards the upkeep of the State. There never was a grosser fallacy or a more absurd presumption than this modern belief in self-righteousness.

But I must return to the gallant Colonel. I have given the pleasantest sample of Col. Dalziel's haughty distrust. Will the reader believe that I had to carefully preserve the flour till the advent of Major Jones who took Col. Dalziel's place when the latter acted for the Inspector-General of Prisons?

Major Jones was the very reverse of Col. Dalziel. From the very first day of his arrival, he became friends with the prisoners. I have a vivid recollection of our first meeting. Although he came with Col. Dalziel with becoming ceremonial, there was a refreshing absence of officialdom about him. He greeted me familiarly and talked about my fellow-prisoners in Sabarmati and conveyed their regards too, which he said they had sent. Though a strict disciplinarian, he never stood on his dignity. I have rarely met an official, whether European or Indian, so free from humbug or false notions of prestige and dignity. He was ready to confess errors—a dangerous and rare practice with Government officials. He once awarded punishment not to a 'political' prisoner, but to a helpless *bona-fide* criminal. He subsequently came to learn that the punishment was not deserved. He straightway and without any pressure from outside cancelled it and made the following remarkable entry: 'I repent of my decision' in the prisoner's history ticket. The accurate manner in which the prisoners sum up superintendents is truly amazing. Major Jones was *bahot bhala*[1]. They had nicknames for every one of the officials.

To finish, however, the story of my attempt to save the flour and other superfluous articles of diet. At Major Jones's very first visit of inspection I requested that what I did not need should be cut off. He immediately gave orders that my request should be complied with. Col. Dalziel distrusted my motives; his successor took me at my word and he allowed me to make all the changes I wanted in the interest of economy, never once suspecting that I could be guilty of mental reservations. Another official with whom we early came in contact was, of course, the Inspector-General of Prisons. He was stiff, monosyllabic and gave one the impression that he was severe. His reserve was peculiarly his own and most uncomfortable for poor prisoners. Most officials being deficient

[1] Very good

in imagination often do unintentional injustices. They refuse to see the other side. They will not have patience to listen to prisoners and expecting from them prompt, coherent replies, and failing to get them, succeed in giving wrong decisions. Visits of inspection are often, therefore, a farce and almost invariably result in the wrong men—bullies or sycophants—being favoured. The right man, the silent humble prisoner will not be heard. Indeed, most of the officials frankly admit that their duty is confined to keeping the prisoners sanitarily clean, preventing prisoners from fighting one another or from absconding and keeping them healthy.

I must consider in the next chapter one of the sad results of this mentality.

Young India, 24-4-1924

367. INTERESTING

Mr. Hardikar[1] sends me the following interesting information:

> Twelve-and-a-half pounds of yarn is being sent to you by Railway Parcel today. This yarn was spun during the last National Week extending from the 6th to the 13th April, by:
>
> 1. The boys of the National High School,
> 2. The girls of Tilak Kanya Shala,
> 3. The Gandhi Pathak of Karnatak Bala Sena (Karnatak Boy Scouts),
> 4. The members of Shevade's family.
>
> Two charkhas were spinning day and night continuously and five were being worked for twelve hours every day for a week. Thus the seven wheels were busy for a total of seven hundred and fifty-six hours.
>
> The total production is about 500 tolas. That means 3/4ths of a tola (approximately) for an hour. The production is poor for the reasons enumerated below. The yarn also is no doubt inferior in quality owing to the same reasons.
>
> 1. Carding was defective.
> 2. Slivers were not prepared well.
> 3. Beginners too were at work on the charkhas.
>
> The work of enrolment of members and collection of Tilak Swaraj Fund was also done during this week. The experience gained while working shows :

[1] N. S. Hardikar, Congress leader from Karnatak; associated with the Hindustani Seva Dal, a volunteer corps; elected to Rajya Sabha in 1952 and re-elected in 1956

> 1. That unless men of influence take an active part and themselves labour for the betterment of the masses, no success can be achieved.
>
> 2. That organized efforts bring desired results.
>
> 3. That young folk do respond if properly approached, guided and helped by the leaders.
>
> 4. That unless the question of workers' maintenance is solved by the Congress no substantial amount of work can be accomplished, howsoever sincere the handful of workers may be.
>
> But the dearth of the men of ability and organizing capacity has made the work suffer immensely. The indifference of the leaders towards the movement has disappointed the young workers who are one by one forsaking them.

The parcel containing yarn has also been received. It shows solid though uncouth work. True spinning like true everything involves labour, thought, method and concentration. An accomplished spinner must know carding, must be able to make his or her own slivers. The processes are not difficult, but they do require application, and unless the spinners take a lively interest in their work and refuse to call yarn yarn that will not weave, just as we refuse to call a rupee a rupee if it does not fetch sixteen annas, proper spinning is impossible. I hope that the boys and girls who did all that continuous spinning for a period will spin daily for a short period, even if it be half an hour. They will be amazed at the result of such methodical and sustained effort.

Mr. Hardikar's remarks on the drawbacks about general work do not require any comment. I can only say, no matter who deserts, no matter what discouragements face us, those of us who have faith in the programme must march forward without flinching and without stopping. The making of nations is no magic trick. It is hard toil and harder suffering. The Congress may or may not devise a scheme of payment of workers. Is it not open to provincial bodies to devise their own means? The most organized province can just as well set the tone to the Congress as the Congress can to the whole of India. Truthful suggestions always come from units that have achieved success.

Young India, 24-4-1924

368. INTERVIEW TO "THE DAILY EXPRESS"

BOMBAY,
April 24, 1924

India must have the right to err, and err grievously. We must have the right as a nation to commit suicide if we want to. Only then can we appreciate what freedom and responsibility are.

Gandhi, the leader of the "Non-co-operation with England" movement, made this statement to me when I saw him at the seaside bungalow near Bombay where he has been staying since his release from prison six weeks ago.

I pointed out that even individuals have not the right, moral or legal, to commit suicide.

They have the power if not the right, and India cannot be wholly free until she possess that power also.

Asked about the position of the British in India under such a scheme of swaraj (Home Rule) as he desires, Gandhi replied :

Most emphatically, there will always be room in India for the right kind of Britons. I can conceive of no scheme of swaraj in which driving the Britons from the country is one of the goals.

Personally, I have many, many warm English friends, whose friendship I value very highly indeed, but there certainly would be a clearing of the atmosphere if a real demonstration were given of the desire to abandon the British policy of exploitation.

Although Gandhi declines to give his personal views regarding the latest developments in Indian politics until the conclusion of negotiations now going on with the Swarajist leaders, the impression he gave me is that he does not wholly approve the obstructionist policy pursued in the Councils.

He is still the same vague idealist. He insists on India's right to achieve economic and moral independence, but still seems to regard the use of the spinning-wheel—which would make India independent of British supplies of cotton goods—as the means of the salvation of the country.

The Hindu, 19-5-1924

369. TELEGRAM TO K. N. NAMBOODRIPAD[1]

ANDHERI,
[On or after *April 24, 1924*]

YOU SHOULD NOT FAST NOR BREAK NOR SCALE FENCE. QUESTION FOR SATYAGRAHIS IS NOT WHAT APPEARS EFFECTIVE BUT WHAT IS PROPER. AWAITING LETTER.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 10290

370. MESSAGE TO "THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"[2]

Mr. Horniman must be permitted to return if we will it. How is that will to be expressed? Certainly not by words. Bombay's, more than India's, honour depends upon a proper answer to the question.

M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 26-4-1924

371. ACTIONS AS AGAINST BELIEFS

The discussion on Maulana Mahomed Ali's speech on Islam still goes on in the newspapers. I see that many persons who are otherwise intelligent and can understand things have also not understood the distinction drawn by him or, if they have, they lose sight of it while speaking and writing about the matter. This means that the distinction has not penetrated deep enough in their minds. It is, therefore, necessary to refresh, time and again, our

[1] This was in reply to a telegram from Namboodripad received on April 24, 1924. This read: "Your telegram 19th today. Satyagraha steadily continues. Batch strength increased to six. Today Government fenced all roads. Yesterday Dewan conferred with us. Says intends proclaiming said roads temple property prohibiting Christians Mahommedans. Also occasional violence from opposition anticipate more. Committee discussed blocking roads scaling or removing fencing or begin fasting complete or partial being from experience more effective. Detailed letter follows advise immediate step."

[2] This was sent on the anniversary of the deportation of Benjamin Guy Horniman, Editor, *The Bombay Chronicle*; *vide* Vol. XV, pp. 348-9 & 383-4.

understanding of the distinction drawn by the Maulana. He believes that—

1. There is a distinction between a man's actions and his ideas.

2. A man whose ideas are of the best may yet be unworthy in his conduct.

3. The ideas of a man of excellent conduct may be inferior to the ideas of others.

Here ideas mean belief, religious creed, religion; for instance, the Christian belief in Jesus' unique divinity and the Islamic belief that there is only one God and that Mahomed is His Prophet. Hinduism, according to me, acknowledges the supremacy of truth and non-violence.

There is no dharma greater than truth. Ahimsa is the supreme dharma.

In conformity with these principles, the Maulana said :

"As a Muslim, I regard the beliefs of an adulterous Muslim as superior to the beliefs of Gandhi whose conduct is the noblest."

The reader will see that here the Maulana has not instituted a comparison between me and an adulterous Muslim; he has just compared my beliefs with those of an adulterous Muslim. Moreover, out of his liberality and his regard for me the Maulana says that, if one man may at all be compared with another, I would stand higher in point of virtue or conduct than even his revered mother or spiritual teacher.

This is an insult neither to me nor to the Hindu religion. The truth is that the whole world accepts the three principles mentioned above. Suppose a European who is the greatest of saints believes that there is nothing wrong in experimenting on animals even by torturing them or by killing them for saving human life, nay, that it is wrong not to do so. Now, as against this, suppose that I am a person of wicked conduct and yet believe that it is degrading to man to kill any animal even to save human life. Then, without the slightest disrespect to that saint, can I not say that, notwithstanding my being a wicked man, in so far as our creed is concerned mine is far superior to his? If there is nothing wrong in my saying this, then there is nothing wrong either in what the Maulana said.

One thing shines out in the current discussion like a ray of hope in darkness. All seem to assert that belief unrelated to action is unavailing and that one can never attain heaven merely through right belief. In the views which the Maulana has expressed, he has nowhere contradicted this idea. I see rays of hope in this attitude,

since those who act on their beliefs and those who are indifferent to the matter, both these classes of people admire virtuous conduct.

But, while extolling right conduct, one must not lose sight of the need for right belief. When one's beliefs are full of errors, one's conduct cannot be of the best. What was wanting in the penance practised by Ravana[1] and Indrajit[2]? By showing that self-control such as Lakshmana's[3] was needed to match the self-control of Indrajit, the *Adi-kavi*[4] proved the importance of conduct. In Indrajit's creed, the highest importance attached to material prosperity, while in Lakshmana's that honour belonged to spiritual good, and so the poet awarded victory to Lakshmana. "Where there is dharma, there is victory", means the same thing. Here dharma can only mean the noblest belief and equally noble conduct.

There is a third class of persons who have no place at all in this discussion. This is the class of hypocrites who merely profess faith in religion, but whose conduct is nothing but outward show; such persons have no real faith in religion. Just because a parrot repeats the name of Rama, will it be regarded as his devotee? Though, of course, by comparing the sounds uttered by two parrots or those by a parrot and a martlet, we can judge the relative value of those sounds.

But a friend writes to say :

> It was all right for the Maulana to have shown fearlessness. . . . What has our country gained by it? The tension between the Hindus and the Muslims has increased. The Maulana's statement that a wicked Muslim was better than a self-controlled Gandhi pierced the Hindus' hearts like an arrow. The Maulana has thrown a bomb over our country.

The person who wrote this is an admirer of the Maulana and not a fanatical Hindu. He can see the shortcomings of the Hindus objectively. Even so, the current atmosphere of suspicion has prejudiced even him. I have already stated that the Maulana never said that a wicked Muslim was superior to a self-controlled Gandhi. He had only said that the religious beliefs of such a Muslim were superior to those of a man of self-restraint like me. Between the Maulana's own view and the view attributed to him by the correspondent, there is as much difference as there is between an elephant

[1] Demon-King of Lanka, in the *Ramayana*

[2] Son of Ravana

[3] Brother of Rama

[4] Valmiki, the author of the *Ramayana*; literally, "the first of poets"

and a horse. In the former, two individuals have been compared, while, in the latter, two sets of religious beliefs. The phrases "a man of self-restraint like Gandhi" and "a wicked Muslim" are not necessary to prove the point. The really important issue is that of religious belief. It is immaterial whether this is A's as compared with B's or C's as compared with D's. The comparison is not between persons; it is between their religious beliefs. It has no bearing at all on their conduct and has nothing to do with their virtues or defects.

Now let us consider whether it was really necessary for the Maulana to have expressed his view about religious beliefs. There is a brotherly relation between him and me. Prompted by that, he praises me in season and out of season. At present the number of those who create discord between the Hindus and the Muslims has increased. Some of them have described him as a "worshipper of Gandhi". Their object in doing so was to lessen his influence among the Muslims. Hence the Maulana said that, though he admired me, he had not accepted me as his religious mentor, that his religion was different from mine, that his religious belief was the same as that of any adulterous Muslim and he placed it higher than my religious belief. This is the substance of the Maulana's speech. If he does not say something like this, how else can he defend his own position and mine, the relationship which exists between us and his religious orthodoxy at the same time? How else could he have answered his critics?

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 27-4-1924

372. MY LANGUAGE

Prompted by his love for me as well as for the Gujarati language, a learned friend writes to me with utmost frankness, as follows :[1]

In this interesting letter, there are some English sentences and words in Gujarati script, and two English words are in Roman script. This will shock many Gujarati brothers and sisters who do not know English. I tender my apology to them. Had I made any alterations, the sweetness and the subtle humour in that letter

[1] In this letter, not translated here, the correspondent refers to some words and phrases wrongly used by Gandhiji in the *History of Satyagraha in South Africa*, serially published in *Navajivan* during 1924-25.

would have disappeared. Even those not knowing English will not find it difficult to understand the substance of the letter.

The reader will readily understand that this letter was not meant for publication. I think the portion I have quoted above came to be written by chance as part of the letter dealing with some private matter. But since the comments therein are reasonable and since my associates as well as I have something to learn from them, I have published an extract.

About five years ago, a learned well-wisher had commented that my Gujarati was "weaker even than a raw matriculate's". A friend who had heard the comment did not like it. When he reported it to me, I said that the comment was correct and was prompted by no hatred towards me but by love of language. What I had said then about that criticism holds good even today.

I know that my knowledge of Gujarati is not profound. I have not been as mindful of grammar as I should like to be. I have not become a writer to serve the cause of the language, but I have had to carry on my work as a journalist with the sort of language I know. I do not say this to have my errors of language condoned. To commit errors knowingly and to ask to be pardoned for them is not only inexcusable, but adding one fault to another. I wish to share with the world a very valuable thing which I have discovered. Maybe there is *moha*[1], ignorance or vanity in my desire, but this is what it is. Language is a great instrument in my work. A skilful artisan makes do with whatever tool he has. I have had to do the same. We labour under a false notion. A person who is supreme in one respect is often considered to be the same in other respects also. To add to this, if the person is looked upon as a mahatma, is there anything which the people will not credit him with? He is accepted as the greatest of all. In order that no one may be deceived about my language on account of such a superstition, I admit my mistakes by publishing the criticism contained in the letter above. I certainly regard myself as competent in respect of satyagraha, the economic policies needed in India from the point of view of the poor and some other kindred matters. But I consider my language to be plainly rustic and one that violates the rules of spelling and grammar. Therefore, it is not my wish at all that others should imitate it.

The several mistakes pointed out by the friend sitting on the top of the Himalayas ought to have been corrected. The imperfections of my language pain me, but they do not put me to

[1] Infatuation

shame. There are some mistakes which could have been easily avoided. I feel ashamed of such mistakes. I consider it better to close down a newspaper than to continue to run it in spite of such mistakes. If a newspaper editor remains indifferent to language, he becomes an offender. The use of the words *murshid* and *amanush*[1] is inexcusable. I cannot guess how those words happened to creep in. I went on dictating, another person took it down and a third transcribed it. My poor knowledge of Urdu and Sanskrit or the copyist's may have been responsible for the mistakes. The real fault is mine first and, then, that of my colleague. Swami Anand cannot pay attention to *Navajivan*'s language, being busy with the work of promoting the circulation of the paper in Gujarat. Mahadev Desai can see no fault in me, just as a lover can see none in his beloved. If he had his way, he would have justified the use even of *murshid* and *amanush*. The learned one has taken his seat on the peak of the Himalayas. None among the three thinks of the injustice likely to be done to the readers. The poor language is an innocent cow and we four have become ready to put her to the knife. The remedy lies in the hands of readers who are lovers of the language. I advise them to serve notices on Swami Anand, Mahadev Desai and others to the effect that if Himalayan blunders of language appear in *Navajivan* hereafter, they will not only stop buying the paper without further intimation, but also set up, if necessary, a "*Navajivan* Boycott Association". If such an association starts a non-violent satyagraha, I shall certainly join it and have a dispute in my own house. I also suggest to the language-lovers that they should write an open letter to "Summit-dweller" that he should take up every week the maximum of half a page in *Navajivan* to list the errors in the use of Gujarati found in the previous issue. Thus, if the readers of *Navajivan* would take effective steps, they would serve the cause of the language and prove that *Navajivan* enjoys their patronage.

Now, a few words by way of criticism of the critic himself. Since we have learnt English, we consciously or unconsciously reproduce in our Gujarati writing the style and idioms of English despite our efforts to avoid them. I have been regarded as an enemy of the English language. As a matter of fact, I have respect for that language and for the Englishmen who speak it. But I am not prepared to accept the domination of either. I am willing to do without both. I firmly believe that a Gujarati[1] with

[1] Incorrectly used for *murid*—meaning admirer, adorer or idolator—and *atimanush*—ameaning superhuman

command over all the resources of his mother-tongue can bring into his writing all the beauties of English, without knowing a single word of English. As I have no prejudice against the English language or the Englishman, I can assimilate the best from both, and this leads to some imitation without any conscious effort on my part. "The bowels of the earth"[1] is an expression used unwittingly. "The womb of the earth"[2] is a very sweet collocation of words. Had I remembered it at the time of dictating, I would have used it by preference. But I do not consider "bowels of the earth" to be an expression which should be avoided. We do have in Gujarati the expression "twisting the mouth"; then, can we not allow the English usage of "twisting the nose"? I have doubts about it, though; while trying to twist the nose, I could not do it, but my mouth got twisted in the process. The Gujarati in me felt happy at this. But can all usage be thus tested? I leave the doubts there for the moment. After we attain swaraj, I shall certainly invite Narasinharaobhai[3] as well as Khabardar[4], who is quite a match for the former, to a duel before me and try to place some samples of their art before the readers of *Navajivan*. At present, we have no time even to enjoy that innocent fun. I do not believe that the indirect construction is banned in Gujarati. By saying this, I do not intend to belittle the comments of my critic. I have given the extract from the letter in order to ask my linguist friends to keep watch over my language and to oblige me, even as some other friends have been keeping watch over my moral conduct.

Whether the construction of the last sentence is permissible or not, I, on behalf of the readers, openly invite "Summit-dweller" to say.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 27-4-1924

[1] *Prithvina antardan*

[2] *Prithvinu udar*

[3] Narasinharao B. Divetia (1859-1937); Gujarati poet and professor of Gujarati, Elphinstone College, Bombay

[4] Ardeshar Framji Khabardar (1881-1954); Parsi poet of Gujarat

373. A CORRECTION

I had written a note[1] in the *Navajivan* of *Chaitra Sud* 2 on the basis of a letter signed, as I had taken it for granted, by the Secretary of the Dohad Taluka Congress Committee. Now the real Secretary, Shri Sukhdev, writes to inform me that the said letter was written, as from the Secretary, in his absence and without his knowledge. Shri Sukhdev's correction points out what had actually happened. A *Bhangi*[2] was permitted to draw water from a *Dhed's*[3] well. The sub-inspector of police not only drove away the *Antyajas* who had gone to draw water from the pucca well belonging to the Local Board, but also compelled them to throw away the water they had actually drawn. The same state of affairs obtains among the *Antyajas* even today. This incident occurred not in Dohad town but in a village called Garbala which is under Dohad's jurisdiction.

That is to say, the condition of the *Antyajas* remains unchanged. Shri Sukhdev should institute an inquiry to find out why a letter giving incorrect information was written as from the Secretary. The condition of the *Antyajas* will not improve, our sins will not be washed away and swaraj will not be attained by giving incorrect information. Sincere expiation will bear fruit even if news about it does not appear in newspapers. Crores of good deeds are done in this world without any publicity in newspapers; even then, they continue to shed their influence for ever.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 27-4-1924

374. MY NOTES

Mill Slivers

We still find mill slivers being used in many places. The use of such slivers did not matter when the spinning-wheel was just coming into use and no one knew how to make slivers. But today their use ought to be considered intolerable. Only a person who

[1] *Vide* "Untouchability and Unapproachability", 6-4-1924.

[2] & [3] Both *Bhangis* and *Dheds* are *Antyajas*, but *Dheds* considered *Bhangis* to be a lower sub-caste and did not allow the latter to draw water from the wells used by them.

does not understand the real principle behind the spinning-wheel will use mill slivers. We desire to see the spinning-wheel installed in every home and in every village in the country. There are seven lakh villages in India. Many of them are very far from the railway line. It is impossible to supply mill-slivers to those villages. Cotton which grows in one village is ginned at another place and then it is sent to a mill for being carded and ultimately it goes back to the same village in the form of slivers for being spun into yarn! This is like getting flour kneaded in Bombay and bread therefrom baked in Pethapur[1]. Cotton should be carded where it is spun and it should be ginned where it is grown. The present unnatural system should be totally abolished. The programme of the spinning-wheel basically includes all the processes preliminary to spinning.

Sisters of Karnatak

Last week, about 50 Karnatak sisters living in Bombay came to see me. They had brought with them yarn spun by them. Along with it, they had brought Rs. 500. One of them had written a play called *Samaj Seva*. The others staged it. Admission was by tickets. The sum of Rs. 500 was saved out of the money received from the sale of tickets for the performance. They spent only Rs. 50 on staging the play.

Would not other sisters follow their example?

Not many sisters can write plays which are readable and fit for the stage and not many can stage plays either, but all can surely spin. One sister told me that Maharashtrian women were active and industrious, but Gujarati women were easy-going. How can Gujarati sisters tolerate such a charge? Of course, I must admit that I do not know of Gujarati sisters having spun as much yarn as Smt. Avantikabehn[2] succeeded in getting Maharashtrian sisters in her circle to spin. We shall certainly find other proofs of the superiority of Maharashtrian sisters if we look for them objectively. Yet, being myself a Gujarati, how can I, writing about Gujarati sisters, be objective? I accept the principle of being objective. Still I must be partial to Gujarati sisters and request them in this article to prove themselves as active and industrious as their sisters in Maharashtra. If they do not heed my humble entreaty, I shall have to believe that the charge levelled by that Gujarati sister against them is true.

[1] A village in North Gujarat

[2] Avantikabai Gokhale, a leading Congress worker of Maharashtra

Both men and women may spin, but it is the special duty of the latter to do so. Wealthy sisters may spin either for their own clothes or to help others. Poor women may spin either for earning their livelihood or to supplement their income so as to earn the expenses on food. In cities, hand-spinning will be mainly of this type. Poor women living in cities can earn more by working as labourers than by spinning. It is useless to ask them to take to spinning. It would be harmful to ask them to do more spinning than they actually need to do and, moreover, the purpose underlying the spinning programme will not be served by doing so.

Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

I had received an open letter containing allegations against the work of the Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, Bombay. I then felt that, if they were all true, the Society had done the work not of showing kindness to animals but of killing them. Before I decided to write about these allegations, I had been inquiring into them; in the meantime, Shri Chhaganlal Nanavati, along with other friends, happened to call on me. I had known him as Secretary of the SPCA and so, jocularly, according to my wont, I came out with those charges against him. He said, "I am no longer the Secretary; may I convey to the Society what you have said?" I told him that he should certainly do so and that I wished also to see the Secretary. I believe I had not permitted Shri Chhaganlal to pass on anything about the matter to the Press. Shri Chhaganlal either supplied to the newspapers a summary of the conversation between us as understood by him or related it at a place whence it could not but reach them. The members of the Society felt hurt at this. They were also surprised that I had formed an adverse opinion without giving a chance to the Society to present the facts on its side. It is certainly against my usual practice to form an opinion in this way. In fact, I had not formed any opinion. The criticism which I had made before Shri Chhaganlal was hypothetical. Its purport was that, if the Society had acted as alleged in that open letter, then, it had been guilty of killing animals. Shri Chhaganlal has seen me again and expressed his deep regret over the report which appeared in the papers. I believe there is no truth in the allegations against the SPCA made in the open letter. I have discussed the matter at great length with the Secretary, Shri Lallubhai, and other members.

Majority Opinion

But there is in that open letter one point which merits consideration:

Can questions relating to religion be decided by majority opinion in a municipality or any other public body? Suppose Hindu, Muslim and Parsi members together pass a resolution by a majority vote that *Antyaja* children be admitted to Hindu schools. Suppose, further, that the resolution would have been rejected if the votes of only the Hindu members had been taken. In such circumstances, can the resolution passed in the manner stated above be considered proper? I do not think so. Moreover, the passing of such a resolution would arrest the progress of the reform itself. Can social reform among the Hindus be brought about by the votes of men following other faiths? A large number among the Hindus should themselves realize that the practice of untouchability is a sin. The opinion of others does not count in this matter. This should be accepted as self-evident.

Likewise, a public body whose members follow different faiths cannot take a decision by a majority vote on the question whether or not the Muslims should spare the cow. Only the Muslims can decide the issue by a majority vote. As the hearts of Hindus and Muslims are embittered, even a question that has nothing to do with religion has come to be regarded as a religious issue. It should not require the authority of holy books to ensure that calves are not slaughtered. No religion can oppose, or opposes, such an economic proposition. But sensitive and suspicious Muslim minds fear that, if they yield to the extent of a finger, they may have to yield up to the elbow.[1] Hence, if I were a member of a municipality, though I regard myself as a pure Hindu, look for the minutest injunctions of Hinduism and wish to follow them scrupulously, and though I worship the mother cow and stand ever ready to lay down my life in her service, I should not like to vote in favour of saving the calf in disregard of the views of our Muslim brethren until I got the support of a majority of them for the proposition. I can succeed in my aim of saving the cow not by opposing the Muslims, but only by winning their hearts. In order to convince them that I do not wish to coerce them in this matter, I would certainly let go even the economic benefits of saving the calf, if I cannot carry them with me.

KHADI IN KATHIAWAR

A khadi-using couple from Kutch came to see me. They were dressed in clothes of khadi made from yarn spun by themselves. They were disappointed when they went from Kutch to Kathiawar. When they visited Rajkot and other cities, they hardly found

[1] A Gujarati saying

any people wearing khadi clothes or khadi caps and they felt very sad. As far as their experience goes, khadi is used more in Kutch than in Kathiawar. I have received from another source a similar complaint about Kathiawar's indifference in this matter; it is to the effect that the Kathiawaris are very voluble and scheming, that they are brave in speech, but slack in action. Hearing this, I hung my head in shame. Now I hear people saying that Kathiawaris will defeat the Kathiawari Pattani Saheb, fulfil their pledge and positively hold the Conference[1]. Some say, "How can Pattani Saheb prevent us from holding the Conference in a jail?" These brave friends of the brave *Kathis* of the past have thus been using brave words, but a Kathiawari like me, watching the scene from a distance, would like to ask the brave satyagrahis, if he can take the liberty of doing so: Do you know the conditions of satyagraha? Do you wear khadi and perform with faith the duty of spinning? Have you conquered your anger? Do you observe non-violence in thought, word and deed in so far as satyagraha requires you to do so? I have not yet completed the list of questions. I am not trying to decide whether or not they should start satyagraha. Vallabhbhai Patel is the man who will decide it. I am only trying to stress the importance of the spinning-wheel. In my view, the spinning-wheel is far more important than the Conference. Unable to find means of livelihood in Kathiawar, many Kathiawaris migrate to far-off places. For their belly's sake, they forgo the life-giving air of Kathiawar and choose to live in the life-killing air of Bombay. How many Kathiawaris, in spite of realizing that the spinning-wheel can make this exodus for economic reasons unnecessary, pause to think why less khadi is being used in Kathiawar? If they do think about the matter, to what extent do they act on their conclusions? It is very easy to popularize khadi in Kathiawar. And yet if the use of khadi is much less there, what does the fact indicate? I do not wish to say that the report given by the Kutchi couple is well-founded. It is possible that their power of observation is weak or that they visited places where they could find no people wearing khadi. I have quoted the Kutchi couple's criticism for the benefit of the public workers of Kathiawar to make them more vigilant. I have indicated the questions which arise if the criticism is well founded.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 27-4-1924

[1] The Kathiawar Political Conference; it was held at Bhavnagar in January 1925.

375. AN APPRECIATION

[End of *April, 1924*][1]

Nearly three years ago Mr. Bharucha introduced Mr. Belgaumwala to me and said: "Here is a monied man who will be a tower of strength to the khaddar movement." Everybody by this time knows my unquenchable faith in Parsis. But in spite of that faith, as I looked at Mr. Belgaumwala I doubted the assurance given by Mr. Bharucha. But I had soon cause for repentance, for Mr. Belgaumwala has more than proved the truth of Mr. Bharucha's prophetic words. Has he not spent thousands in khaddar propaganda? Has he not become a staunch believer in the message of the spinning-wheel? Mr. Banker, when he dragged Mr. Belgaumwala to Karnatak, little knew what the Karnatak tour would make of the Parsi friend. Anyway he has returned with such zeal for the charkha that he tells me to my delight that early in the morning he sits at the spinning-wheel as a daily sacred duty. The spinning gives him joy, peace and consolation that at least for half an hour he identifies himself with the poorest in the land. May his example prove infectious for all monied men and women!

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 8702

376. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

[End of *April 1924*][2]

BHAI HARIBHAU[3],

It was not your articles in the *Malava Mayur* which made me feel unhappy. I had only a cursory glance at them. I felt unhappy because of a difference of principle. I am of opinion that very little good is done by everyone who can write starting a paper. I could have appreciated your doing this if you had a special message to give to the people of Malwa. All these are rather subtle

[1] The exact date of this item is not ascertainable. The source is located among April 1924 documents in the S.N. photostats.

[2] In the postscript Gandhiji says, "I hope to be in the Ashram in about a month." He was there on May 29, 1924.

[3] Then Editor, *Hindi Navajivan*

issues. You need not think about them. We will talk further about them when we meet.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.] I shall certainly try to write for *Hindi Navajivan*. When must the articles for it reach you?

I think it necessary that the spirit of service should be accompanied by understanding of the problems. Please do not be in a hurry to stop publication of the *Mayur*. I hope to be in the Ashram in about a month. The maxim enunciated in the verse, "Not to embark upon a venture [in the first instance, is a sign of wisdom]", applies to this activity.

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6051. Courtesy: Martand Upadhyaya

377. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

[After *April 30, 1924*][1]

BHAI HARIBHAU,

I have your letter. I felt unhappy when I saw *Malava Mayur*. Unless one has a special message to give, one ought not to start a new magazine. I think you will do well to free yourself from it if you can discontinue it. If, however, it has begun to pay its expenses, let it continue.

I am sending with this letter an article for *Hindi Navajivan*. Please send *Hindi Navajivan* regularly to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6052. Courtesy: Martand Upadhyaya

[1] The letter appears to have been written after the preceding one, in which Gandhiji had promised to try and send an article for publication.

378. LETTER TO OTANE JAKATA

[After *April 30, 1924*]

DEAR SIR,

Thank you for your letter[1] as well as the book.

I have absolutely no time to give you the details you need, even if I was minded to do so.[2] I do not keep any portraits of me nor do I give sittings. The recent photographs are all snap-shots. The best books of reference are collections of my writings in *Y.I.* by Mr. Ganesan of Madras (give address)[3] and my speeches by Mr. G. A. Natesan also of Madras (address). The latter contains rules of the Satyagraha Ashram.[4]

Yours truly,

[OTANE JAKATA
45, KODA MACHO 4 GHOME
TAIHOKU, FORMUSA, JAPAN]

From a photostat: S.N. 8759

379. MY JAIL EXPERIENCES-III

SOME TERRIBLE RESULTS

In this chapter, I propose to discuss the results of the officials thinking that their duty ends with caring for the health of the prisoners, preventing fights among them or abscondings. I do not think I am exaggerating when I say that the jails may be described as well- or ill-managed cattle-farms. A superintendent who ensures good food for the prisoners and does not punish without

[1] Dated April 30, the letter accompanied a copy of the writer's book *Saint-Hero Gandhi*, and sought information about papers or publications throwing light on Gandhiji's career, the stories of his childhood, the history of the Satyagraha Ashram, men and women around Gandhiji, the Indian nationalist movement, and Gandhiji's "reproaches against so-called factors of civilization". Jakata proposed to make use of the data for a revised edition of his book.

[2] It appears, however, that Mahadev Desai did, in fact, prepare a detailed statement furnishing replies point by point to the various questions put by Jakata in his letter. A photostat of this (S.N. 8837) is available.

[3] Words in brackets were evidently instructions to the secretary.

[4] On the top of the letter Gandhiji had written: "Copy and get it signed by me."

cause is considered both by the Government and the prisoners as a model superintendent. Neither party expects more. If a superintendent were to introduce the real human touch in his relations with the prisoners, he is highly likely to be misunderstood by the prisoners and will very probably be distrusted by the Government as being unpractical, if not worse.

The jails have, therefore, become hot-beds of vice and degradation. The prisoners do not become better for their life in them. In most cases they become worse than before. Perhaps all the world over, the jails are an institution the most neglected by the public. The result is that there is little or no public check on their administration. It is only when a political prisoner of some fame finds himself within the walls of a prison that there is any public curiosity about the happenings therein.

What classification there is of prisoners is regulated more in the interest of the administration than those of the prisoners. Thus, for instance, one would find habitual criminals and persons who have committed not a moral but a merely statutory offence are put together in the same yard, in the same block and even in the same cell. Fancy forty or fifty persons of varying types being locked in the same cell for night after night! An educated man, who had been convicted under the Stamp Act for having used an officially-defaced stamp, was put in the same block as habitual offenders regarded as dangerous characters. It is no unusual thing to see murderers, abductors, thieves, and mere statutory offenders huddled together. There are some tasks which can only be done jointly by several men, such as working the pump. Able-bodied men alone can be put onto such tasks. Some highly sensitive men were included in one such gang. Now the ordinary prisoners in such a gang will use language which no decent man would care to hear. The men who use indecent language have no sense of indecency in the language they use. But a sensitive man will feel most uncomfortable when such language is used in his presence. Convict-warders are in immediate charge of such gangs. In the discharge of their duty, it is customary for them to swear at prisoners in the choicest billingsgate. And when they are sufficiently worked up, they do not spare the rod either. Needless to say, both the punishments are not only unauthorized, but they are unlawful. I could, however, present quite a decent catalogue of things unlawful that happen in jails to the knowledge of, and sometimes even with the connivance of, officials. In the case mentioned by me, the sensitive prisoner could not put up with the foul language. He, therefore, refused to work in the gang unless it was stopped. It was due to

the prompt intervention of Major Jones that a most awkward situation was averted. But the relief was momentary. He had no power to stop a recurrence of the trouble; for it must continue to recur so long as prisoners are not classified in accordance with a moral standard and with regard to their human requirements rather than administrative convenience.

One would have thought that, in a jail where every prisoner is under surveillance night and day and can never be out of the sight of a warder, crimes will not be possible. But, unfortunately, every conceivable crime against morality is not only possible, but is committed almost with impunity. I need not mention small pilferings, deceptions, petty and even serious assaults, but I wish to refer to unnatural crimes. I will not shock the reader with any details. In spite of my many jail experiences, I did not think that such crimes were possible in jails. But the Yeravda experience gave me more than one painful shock. The discovery of the existence of unnatural crimes produced one of the greatest of shocks. All the officials who spoke to me about them said that, under the existing system, it was impossible to prevent them. Let the reader understand that, in a majority of cases, the consent of the victim is lacking. It is my deliberate opinion that it is possible to prevent such crimes if the administration of jails is humanized and can be made a matter of public concern. The number of prisoners in the jails of India must be several hundred thousand. It should be the concern of public workers to know what happens to them. After all, the motive behind punishment is reformation. The legislature, the judge and the jailor are believed to expect that the punishments would act as deterrents, not merely for the physical and mental hurt they cause, but for the repentance that prolonged isolation must bring about. But the fact is that punishments only brutalize the prisoners. In the jails they are never given an opportunity for repentance and reform. The human touch is lacking. True, there is a weekly visit from religious preachers. I was not permitted to attend any of these meetings, but I know that they are mostly shams. I do not wish to suggest that the preachers are shams. But a religious service once a week for a few minutes can produce no impression on those who ordinarily see nothing wrong in crimes. It is necessary to provide a responsive atmosphere in which a prisoner unconsciously sheds bad and cultivates good habits.

But such atmosphere is impossible so long as the system of entrusting convicts with most responsible work is continued. By far the worst part of the system is the appointment of convict-officers.

These men are necessarily long-term prisoners. They are, therefore, men who have committed the most serious crimes. Generally the bullies are chosen as warders. They are the most forward. They succeed in pushing themselves to the front. They are the instruments for the commission of almost all the crimes that take place in the jails. A free fight resulting in one death once took place because two such warders were concerned in the same prisoner who was a victim of their unnatural lust. Everyone knew what was happening in the jail. But the authorities intervened only to prevent further fighting and further bloodshed. These convict-officers recommend tasks for the other prisoners. They supervise the tasks. They are responsible for the good behaviour of the prisoners under their charge. In fact, the will of the permanent officers is expressed and carried out through these convicts who are dignified as "officers". The marvel to me was that under such a system, things were not much worse than they actually were. It once more demonstrated to me how superior men were to a wicked system as they were inferior to a good one. Human beings seem naturally to seek the middle path.

The whole of the cooking, too, is entrusted to prisoners. The result is indifferent cooking and organized favouritism. It is the prisoners who grind corn, shred vegetables, cook food and serve. When complaints as to short and badly cooked rations were recurringly made, the invariable answer was that the remedy was in their own hands as they cooked their own food, as if they were related to one another and understood mutual responsibility! Once when I pushed the argument to its logical extent, I was told that no administration could afford the cost. I differed from the view at the time of argument. Further observation has confirmed me in my contention that, under a well-devised system, jail administration can be made self-supporting. I hope to devote a chapter to an examination of jail economics. For the present, I must satisfy myself with saying that no question of cost can possibly be admitted as relevant in a consideration of moral abuses.

Young India, 1-5-1924

380. NOTES

A Catalogue of Crimes

1. Contributing to Tilak Swaraj Fund;
2. Association with Non-co-operators;
3. Subscribing to N.C.O. papers;
4. Standing for Non-co-operation;
5. Wearing khaddar.

These were actually regarded as crimes by the Post Master-General of Madras in April 1922 and were the only grounds for dismissal of Mr. Subba Rao, a servant in the Postal Department, after 17 years' service. Let not the reader imagine that now Mr. Subba Rao has been reinstated. Nothing of the kind has happened. The poor dismissed servant of the Government petitioned the Viceroy and on the 3rd October 1923 he received a reply saying that His Excellency had 'decided to reject your (his) memorial'. The order of dismissal contains the counts as I have given them. The recital of each count is followed by a description. The contribution to the Tilak Swaraj Fund, for instance, is stated to have been given in the name of the minor daughter and amounted to Rs. 5. Venom could not go any further. The logical result of such dismissals should be a regulation making it penal for a member of the legislature to wear khaddar. By a stroke of the pen we should then have domestic peace. The Government would be happy and so will the pro-Council men and the no-Council men. As it is, there can be no peace so long as men like Mr. Subba Rao have a real grievance against everybody—against the Government for manufacturing crimes, against the pro-Council men who, because of their eminence, wear khaddar with impunity and yet afford no relief to Mr. Subba Rao and such others, and against the no-Council men for failing to make khaddar universal and thus making the demand for swaraj irresistible.

What Is Violence?

Apropos of my article in *Young India* (April 10, 1924) entitled, 'What It Is Not', a correspondent examining the ingredients of violence says:

> The real issue is not about just or unjust grounds. Whether an act is an act of violence or not can be determined, not by reference to the grounds on which it is undertaken, but by reference to the manner in

> which it affects the party against whom it is directed and the effects which it produces generally. Both—acts of violence and acts that are not acts of violence—may have a just or an unjust cause. If a just cause can vindicate the adoption of a remedy, why should it justify a passive remedy only and not an active remedy? If it can vindicate N.C.O., it can equally justify the use of a sword. What moral delicacy should induce us to adopt N.C.O. and discard the sword? We are answered that the use of the sword is a way of violence. Why is that so? The reason is clear that it causes pain and suffering to our adversary. Does not N.C.O. do the same? Is there any difference between the two? The only difference is this. Whilst a thrust from the sword would cause a feeling of pain and suffering due to a disturbance caused thereby to the natural processes *inside the body*, which result in and preserve life, the practising of N.C.O. would cause pain and suffering by a disturbance to the processes working *outside the body* in the economic, social and political spheres—processes which are as much responsible for the preservation of life as those working inside the body.

The argument is clever, but it does not take us very far. The writer confuses two words, pain and violence, and regards them as synonymous. A physician who administers a bitter drug or cuts open an artery causes pain, but does no violence. The patient thanks him for it. If I do not serve my employer because he ill-treats me, my resignation, i.e., non-co-operation, may cause pain, but I have used no violence. But if I hammer him so as to make him do justice, I have extorted justice by violence.

Hindu-Muslim Tension in Sind

Dr. Choithram has sent me newspaper cuttings which give a fair idea of the trouble that seems to be brewing in Sind. I have no desire to go into the facts of the case. There was an attempt to settle the Hindu-Muslim dispute by arbitration. Dr. Choithram and Seth Haji Abdulla Haroon have had their say in the Press. Seth Haji Abdulla Haroon says that there could be no arbitration before change of hearts. Whatever the cause, the failure of arbitration is unfortunate. But the painful part of the whole affair is that the Hindus do not feel that they are safe and that the police guard the route in the affected area. If this is true, there is something radically wrong. Whoever is to blame, there should be an understanding between the parties that no one can take the law into his own hands. The parties may go to court if they cannot arbitrate, but overawing of one party by another can only end in bloodshed eventually. That is hardly the way of religion.

I assure my Hindu and Mussalman friends that I am feverishly anxious to disburden my soul of my views on Hindu-Muslim

unity. I am simply waiting for friends who have asked me not to say anything till they and I have discussed the question. The accounts I receive daily of the tension show that the greatest question before the country is that of Hindu-Muslim unity and no other. I hope that a way will be found out of the present most unsatisfactory state of things.

Young India, 1-5-1924

381. THE STARVING MOPLAH

I gladly print the following from Mr. Yakub Hasan:

> I enclose a copy of the statement I have lately issued to the Press about Moplah Relief. You will no doubt be grieved to learn that thousands of women and children belonging to the Moplahs, who were killed in the rebellion or were shot or hanged afterwards or are undergoing long imprisonment, are almost starving.
>
> Moplahs as a class have always been poor. Most of them were cultivating lands under the petty landlords called Jenmies, who are almost all Hindus. The oppression of the Jenmies is a matter of notoriety and a long-standing grievance of the Moplahs that has never been redressed though unsuccessful attempts were made several times to ease the situation by means of legislation. The rebellion has reduced the poverty-stricken Moplah community to still lower depth of destitution. The forcible conversions have placed the community in bad odour with the Hindus in general and the Jenmies in particular, and the Government has also no love for the people who have not long ago fought pitched battles with it. Hindus have had their vengeance through the military who burnt the Moplah houses and their mosques wholesale. Thousands of Moplahs have been killed, shot, hanged or imprisoned for life and thousands are now languishing in jail. Of those who are left behind, several thousand are paying fines in monthly instalments in lieu of imprisonment for two years. These people are always under the thumb of the police. The few who have escaped death, jail or fine are not in any happier condition. They are frightened out of their wits and are constantly living in terror. Some of the people I talked to in the out-of-way places were trembling with fear in spite of the assurance given to them that I was their friend and the object of my visit was only to help them if I can.
>
> This is the general condition of the Moplahs in South Malabar. The condition of the women who have lost husbands and fathers by death or imprisonment is still worse. Unlike their sisters in other parts of India, Moplah women do not observe *purdah*. They are intelligent and indus-

trious and always work with their male relations in fields and elsewhere. They are now very much handicapped; for just when the burden of supporting the family is thrown on their shoulders and they are called upon by the untoward circumstances to be the sole bread-earners for their families, they find no work that would give them a living wage. Though Moplahs have always been poor, still there were no beggars among them. But now it is a common sight to see Moplah women and children in tatters begging in the streets. Among the poor Muslim women who beg in this alms-giving month of Ramzan, I find almost half are Moplah women in Madras, and I am told this is the case in all large cities in this Presidency.

As for children, their neglected condition can be more imagined than described.

Something has to be done and done immediately if the Moplah community is to be saved from moral, even physical, destruction. In spite of all his faults and shortcomings, the Moplah is a fine man. He has the bravery, the pluck and the grit of his Arab father, and the gentleness and the industry of his Nair mother. His religious zeal is more misunderstood than appreciated. He is as a rule peaceful, but he brooks no affront to his honour or religion. Unfortunate circumstances, the causes of which I need not enter into on this occasion, forced him into the position of a rebel. He has done what anyone, Hindu, Muslim or Christian, under the same circumstances and in the same emergency, would have done in self-defence and self-interest. He has suffered the consequence of his deeds. Should the society also visit his sins on his wife and children?

I place this matter before you, Mahatmaji, because you are the head of the Indian nation, and both Hindus and Mussalmans jointly and severally look upon you as their leader. It is not for me to say how this great problem should be tackled. In your wisdom and goodness of heart, you will, God willing, find ways and means to carry life-giving succour to the suffering Moplah women and children. Your appeal will make the Hindus forgive and forget and show that magnanimity of the heart without which no nation can aspire to be great, and your appeal will make Mussalmans realize more fully their duty to themselves. I am sure all the leading men, irrespective of caste or creed or political thoughts, will join hands with you in bringing this humanitarian cause home to the people at large.

My appeal must necessarily be to the Hindus. I do not know how far it will be successful in the present tension between the two communities. But I must not think of the result. I should be guilty of cowardice if I did not publish Mr. Yakub Hasan's letter

which commands my sympathy. I know that the Hindus feel sore over what the Moplahs in 1921 did to their Hindu neighbours in Malabar. I know that thousands of Hindus think that the Moplah atrocities were not as strongly condemned by the general body of the Mussalmans as they might have been. I know that many will (as I do) take exception to Mr. Yakub Hasan's sweeping assertion that 'he (Moplah) has done what anyone, Hindu, Muslim or Christian, under the same circumstances and in the same emergency would have done in self-defence or self-interest'. No circumstance and no provocation however grave could possibly justify forcible conversions. I should hope that Mr. Yakub Hasan has not meant to include these among the pardonable acts of the Moplahs.

But even assuming the truth of the worst that the Hindus may have to say against the Moplahs and the contemporaneous or subsequent conduct of the rest of the Indian Mussalmans, I have no doubt that, if the Hindus allowed their prejudices to interfere with their charity towards their countrymen and countrywomen, the starving Moplahs, it would be counted as a sin before the Judgment Seat. We may not remember against posterity the sins of its forefathers. The Moplahs sinned against God and have suffered grievously for it. Let the Hindus also remember that they have not allowed the opportunity of revenge to pass by. Many have done all they could to take reprisals when they got the opportunity.

My point is simple. In face of the awful fact of starvation and homelessness, all argument and all opposition must be hushed. Generations hence, when all our evil acts will have been forgotten, posterity will cherish the treasured memory of every simple act of love shown by the one to the other. I therefore ask every Hindu reader who will extend the hand of love and fellowship to his starving Moplah brother and sister and their children, to send his or her mite, and I shall endeavour to see that it is properly distributed among the most deserving among the Moplahs.

Young India 1-5-1924

382. VAIKOM SATYAGRAHA

Vaikom Satyagraha has attracted such wide public attention and, though restricted to a small area, presents so many problems for solution that I offer no apology to the reader for constantly engaging his attention for it.

I have received several important and well-thought-out letters protesting against my countenancing it in any way whatsoever. One such letter even urges me to use whatever influence I may have for stopping it altogether. I am sorry that I am unable to publish all these letters. But I hope to cover all the points raised in these letters or otherwise brought to my notice.

The first may be cleared at once. Exception has been taken to Mr. George Joseph—a Christian—having been allowed to replace Mr. Menon as leader and organizer. In my humble opinion, the exception is perfectly valid. As soon as I heard that Mr. Joseph was 'invited to take the lead' and he contemplated taking it, I wrote to him as follows on 6th April:

> As to Vaikom, I think that you shall let the Hindus do the work. It is they who have to purify themselves. You can help by your sympathy and by your pen, but not by organizing the movement and certainly not by offering satyagraha. If you refer to the Congress resolution of Nagpur, it calls upon the Hindu members to remove the curse of untouchability. I was surprised to learn from Mr. Andrews that the disease had infected even the Syrian Christians.[1]

Unfortunately, before the letter could reach him, Mr. Menon was arrested and Mr. George Joseph had taken his place. But he had nothing to expiate, as every Hindu has in the matter of untouchability as countenanced by the Hindus. His sacrifice cannot be appropriated by the Hindus in general as expiation made, say, by Malaviyaji would be. Untouchability is the sin of the Hindus. They must suffer for it, they must purify themselves, they must pay the debt they owe their suppressed brothers and sisters. Theirs is the shame and theirs must be the glory when they have purged themselves of the black sin. The silent, loving suffering of one single pure Hindu as such will be enough to melt the hearts of millions of Hindus; but the sufferings of thousands of

[1] *Vide* "Letter to George Joseph", 6-4-1924.

non-Hindus in behalf of the untouchables will leave the Hindus unmoved. Their blind eyes will not be opened by outside interference, however well-intentioned and generous it may be; for, it will not bring home to them the sense of guilt. On the contrary, they would probably hug the sin all the more for such interference. All reform to be sincere and lasting must come from within.

But why may the Vaikom satyagrahis not receive monetary aid from outside, especially if it be from Hindus? So far as non-Hindu assistance is concerned, I am as clear about such pecuniary help as I am about such personal help. I may not build my Hindu temple with non-Hindu money. If I desire a place of worship, I must pay for it. This removal of untouchability is much more than building a temple of brick and mortar. Hindus must bleed for it, must pay for it. *They* must be prepared to forsake wife, children and all for the sake of removing the curse. As for accepting assistance from Hindus from outside, such acceptance would betray unreadiness on the part of the local Hindus for the reform. If the satyagrahis have the sympathy of the local Hindus, they must get locally all the money they may need. If they have not, the very few who may offer satyagraha must be content to starve. If they are not, it is clear that they will evoke no sympathy among the local Hindus whom they want to convert. Satyagraha is a process of conversion. The reformers, I am sure, do not seek to force their views upon the community; they strive to touch its heart. Outside pecuniary help must interfere with the love process if I may so describe the method of satyagraha. Thus viewed, the proposed Sikh free kitchen I can only regard as a menace to the frightened Hindus of Vaikom.

There is no doubt in my mind about it that the orthodox Hindus, who still think that worship of God is inconsistent with touching a portion of their own co-religionists and that a religious life is summed up in ablutions and avoidance of physical pollutions merely, are alarmed at the development of the movement at Vaikom. They believe that their religion is in danger. It behoves the organizers, therefore, to set even the most orthodox and the most bigoted at ease and to assure them that they do not seek to bring about the reform by compulsion. The Vaikom satyagrahis must stoop to conquer. They must submit to insults and worse at the hands of the bigoted and yet love them, if they will change their hearts.

But a telegram says in effect, 'the authorities are barricading the roads; may we not break or scale the fences? May we not fast? For we find that fasting is effective.'

My answer is, if we are satyagrahis, we dare not scale or break fences. Breaking or scaling fences will certainly bring about the imprisonment, but the breaking will not be civil disobedience. It will be essentially incivil and criminal. Nor may we fast. I observe that my letter to Mr. Joseph with references of fasting has been misunderstood. For the sake of ready reference, I reproduce below the relevant part :

> 'Omit fasting but stand or squat in relays with quiet submission till arrested.'
>
> The above is the wire sent to you in reply to yours. Fasting in satyagraha has well-defined limits. You cannot fast against a tyrant, for it will be a species of violence done to him. You invite penalty from him for disobedience of his orders, but you cannot inflict on yourselves penalties when he refuses to punish and renders it impossible for you to disobey his orders so as to compel infliction of penalty. Fasting can only be resorted to against a lover, not to extort rights but to reform him, as when a son fasts for a father who drinks. My fast at Bombay and then at Bardoli was of that character. I fasted to reform those who loved me. But I will not fast to reform, say, General Dyer, who not only does not love me but who regards himself as my enemy. Am I quite clear?[1]

It need not be pointed out that the above remarks are of a general character. The words 'tyrant' and 'lover' have also a general application. The one who does an injustice is styled 'tyrant'. The one who is in sympathy with you is the 'lover'. In my opinion, in the Vaikom movement, opponents of the reform are the 'tyrant'. The State may or may not be that. In this connection, I have considered the State as merely the police striving to keep the peace. In no case is the State or the opponents in the position of 'lover'. The supporters of Vaikom satyagrahis enjoy that status. There are two conditions attached to a satyagrahi fast. It should be against the lover and for his reform, not for extorting rights from him. The only possible case in the Vaikom movement when a fast will be justified would be when the local supporters go back upon their promise to suffer. I can fast against my father to cure him of a vice, but I may not in order to get from him an inheritance. The beggars of India who sometimes fast against those who do not satisfy them are no more satyagrahis than children who fast against a parent for a fine dress. The former are impudent, the latter are childish. My Bardoli fast was against fellow-workers who ignited the Chauri Chaura spark and for the sake of reforming them. If the Vaikom satyagrahis fast because the authorities will not arrest

[1] *Vide* "Letter to George Joseph", 12-4-1924.

them, it will be, I must say in all humility, the beggar's fast described above. If it proves effective, it shows the goodness of the authorities, not that of the cause or of the actors. A satyagrahi's first concern is not the effect of his action. It must always be its propriety. He must have faith enough in his cause and his means, and know that success will be achieved in the end.

Some of my correspondents object altogether to satyagraha in an Indian State. In this matter, too, let me quote the remaining portion of my foregoing letter to Mr. Joseph :

> You may be patient. You are in an Indian State. Therefore, you may wait in deputation on the Diwan and the Maharaja. Get up a monster petition by the orthodox Hindus who may be well-disposed towards the movement. See also those who are opposing. You can support the gentle direct action in a variety of ways. You have already drawn public attention to the matter by preliminary satyagraha. Above all, see to it that it neither dies nor by impatience becomes violent.

Satyagraha in an Indian State by the Congress for the attainment of its object is, I think, clearly forbidden. But satyagraha in an Indian State in connection with local abuses may be legitimately taken up at any time provided the other necessary conditions are fulfilled. As, in an Indian State, there can be no question of non-co-operation, the way of petitions and deputations is not only always open, but it is obligatory. But, say some of my correspondents, the conditions for lawful satyagraha do not exist in Vaikom. They ask :

1. Is unapproachability exclusively observed at Vaikom or is it general throughout Kerala?
2. If it is general, then what is the special reason for selecting Vaikom in preference to places within the British territory in Kerala?
3. Did the satyagrahis petition the Maharaja, the local Assembly, etc.?
4. Did they consult the orthodox sections?
5. Is not the use of the road the thin end of the wedge, is it not a step towards the abolition of caste altogether?
6. Is not the road a private road?

The first two questions are irrelevant. Unapproachability and untouchability have to be tackled wherever they exist. Wherever the workers consider a place or time suitable, it is their duty to start work, whether by satyagraha or other legitimate means.

My information goes to show that the method of petition, etc., was tried not once but often.

They did consult the orthodox people and thought that they had the latter's support.

I am assured that the use of the road is the final goal of the satyagrahis. It is, however, not to be denied that the present movement throughout India is to throw open to the suppressed classes all the *public* roads, *public* schools, *public* wells and *public* temples which are accessible to non-Brahmins.

It is, in fact, a movement to purify caste by ridding it of its most pernicious result. I personally believe in *Varnashrama*, though it is true that I have my own meaning for it. Anyway, anti-untouchability movement does not aim at inter-dining or inter-marrying. Those who mix up the touch and the last two things together are doing harm to the cause of the suppressed classes as also to that of inter-dining and intermarriage.

I have letters which protest that the road in question is a public road. In fact, my informants tell me, it was some years ago even accessible to the unapproachables as to other non-Brahmins.

In my opinion, therefore, there is a just cause for the Vaikom satyagraha and so far as it is kept within proper limits and conducted with the strictest regard to non-violence and truth, it deserves full public sympathy.

Young India, 1-5-1924

383. CHARKHA IN SOUTH KANARA

Writing about the work of the volunteers in relieving distress caused by the floods in South Kanara, Mr. Sadashiv Rao[1] writes:

> About Rs. 50,000 were collected by the Floods Relief Committee of which I happen to be the Joint-Secretary; and most of this money has been distributed among the poor, first for affording food and clothing and latterly by way of money doles for building huts or small dwelling places for the poor. In accordance with the undertaking given by the Committee to the public, the whole amount thus collected has practically been spent. But the amount of Rs. 5,000 timely sanctioned by the All-India Working Committee of the Indian National Congress and earmarked for advancing the constructive programme in the flood-stricken areas has proved, like the flood itself, to be a blessing in disguise. Under the auspices of the Rashtriya Jilla Khadi Board working under our District Congress Committee, we have opened twelve model depots in

[1] Karnad Sadashiv Rao, Karnatak Congress leader

the affected parts wherein weaving and carpentry have been arranged to be taught according to the aptitudes of the people; and a great impetus has been given to the progress of spinning in the affected parts among all classes of people. A convenient central village has been singled out for working the depot; and every morning our workers go into the neighbouring villages with cotton and charkhas to teach carding and spinning to the people in their homes. Nurseries of cotton plants have also been made on the plots attached to these depots and arrangements have been made to distribute the plants gratis or at nominal prices among the people for being planted in their own places. Last year the Congress Committee made a humble attempt to popularize cotton-growing by a free distribution of seeds suited to the soil at this time of the year. But barring a handful of them, most of the people did not take kindly to it. It is for this reason that a departure has been made this year. Already more than five hundred families have taken enthusiastically to spinning and we expect a thousand pounds of yarn in this month. Last month we received through these twelve depots 735 lbs. of yarn of counts ranging from 8 to 20. We are obliged to give charkhas on the instalment system as the people are poor. It is a most encouraging feature that the majority of these families who have begun to spin are Mahomedans and Christians. The monsoon is almost upon us as it is expected to break out earlier this year, and already we have had showers with thunder and lightning. It is well-known that within a few weeks after the rains set in, most of the people in village parts are without occupation. The money in hand set apart for the constructive programme has been exhausted. And, if the charitable public do not come to our rescue at this juncture, the humble work begun by our struggling volunteers for relieving the distress of the poor by supplying supplementary occupations at their very doors will come to grief. Having regard to the fact that 90 p.c. of the people that have thus taken to spinning are women, I feel that I can confidently look up to all who love nation-building work to contribute their mite for helping us to continue this glorious work of serving the poor. There are thousands of women who are hankering to have the charkhas; but, for want of funds, the work cannot progress.

We have also made another departure in accordance with your advice. There are twenty national schools in our district with a thousand pupils. Two of these are high schools. Boys coming out of these schools are taken as apprentices in these depots; and they are asked to go back to their respective villages for starting national elementary schools or panchayat courts or any other handicrafts like weaving, carpentry, iron smithy, dyeing, printing, etc., arrangements for teaching all of which are being made in these depots. Will the appeal of our self-sacrificing, struggling volunteers on behalf of our voiceless poor go in vain?

This is solid work deserving support.

I had the honour of receiving about fifty Kanarese sisters a few days ago.[1] They had organized among themselves a dramatic performance. The play is written by one of them. The performance fetched Rs. 550. The expenses amounted to Rs. 50. These sisters brought me the Rs. 500 and yarn spun by them. I know that these sisters will appreciate the use I propose to make of their precious gift. I feel that I cannot do better than send the amount for distributing the charkha among their distressed Mussalman and Christian sisters. The amount will be sent forthwith to Mr. Sadashiv Rao.

Young India, 1-5-1924

384. "SHANTAM, SHIVAM, ADVAITAM[2]*"*

I have hitherto taken liberties with Mr. Andrews' writings for *Young India*. But in spite of personal allusions, I have not the courage to remove a single word from the beautiful prose poem he has given us.

Young India, 1-5-1924

385. TELEGRAM TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI[3]

[BOMBAY,
On or after *May 1, 1924*]

WIRE RECEIVED. ONLY COMFORT I CAN OFFER IS SEND DEVDAS. WIRE CONDITION AND REPLY.[4]

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 8777

[1] *Vide* "My Notes", 27-4-1924.

[2] This was Gandhiji's comment at the end of an article by C. F. Andrews under this title.

[3] This was in reply to Rajagopalachari's telegram to Devdas Gandhi of May 1, 1924, stating: "Son-in-law's pneumonia and mental derangement continuing distressing."

[4] Rajalopalachari later wired: "Son-in-law moved to hospital yesterday. Myself strangely free asthma. Ask Bapu forgive."

386. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

ANDHERI,
Friday [On or before *May 2, 1924*][1]

BHAI JAMNALALJI,

Mahatma Bhagwandinji and Pandit Sunderlalji have come here. They wish to talk about the Asahayoga Ashram and other matters. But I told them that I could do nothing without meeting you. I advised them to meet you and they have decided to do so. If, after hearing them, you want to tell or ask me anything, please do so.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From the Hindi original: G.N. 2846

387. STATEMENT ON KATHIAWAR POLITICAL CONFERENCE[2]

[BOMBAY,
Before *May 4, 1924*]

I understand that the Reception Committee of the Kathiawar Political Conference is prepared to give assurance to the State that all decency will be maintained by the Parishad, and that no personal remarks will be passed over the chiefs. I also understand that the Working Committee, which met at Porbandar, had got to consult Pattani Saheb before it made recommendation to the Reception Committee to hold the Conference in Bhavnagar, and in failing to do this, it has acted indiscriminately.

Pattani Saheb desires that the Parishad should not be held in Bhavnagar this year. I also understand that he will have many difficulties in allowing it to meet. He says he is prepared to give all help if the Parishad be held at Songad. He is prepared to encourage the people of Bhavnagar to attend it and, above all these,

[1] According to a noting on this letter, the addressee replied to it on May 3. The preceding Friday fell on May 2.

[2] The statement was issued as a result of talks which the Conference workers had with Gandhiji and Vallabhbhai Patel in Bombay. The text reproduced here is from a correspondent's despatch of May 4 entitled "Bhavnagar Notes".

he is prepared to give all necessary help for making it possible for the Conference to meet in the boundary of any State next year. He only requires one condition, that all decency be observed in the lectures, etc., of this year. He does not desire to have any binding or condition for the next year. He believes the Parishad itself will observe its own decorum.

Looking to the situation on the whole, I believe the Reception Committee should not insist upon holding the Conference in Bhavnagar this year. They should agree with Pattani Saheb, and prove their full worth as satyagrahis by observing complete decency in the Parishad. There is not the least disgrace for the people in so doing. Satyagraha does not lose its lustre, and the path becomes clear for the future. But supposing everything goes against our expectations, Pattani Saheb breaks his promise or he be away from Kathiawar then, or he fails to get the Conference held in a State after all possible attempts, the satyagrahi has nothing to lose. A true satyagrahi is never weary of observing proper manners. He has never to repent of lost opportunities. When time comes, he is ever ready.

The Bombay Chronicle, 8-5-1924

388. RENUNCIATION PERSONIFIED[1]

God created nothing finer than the Hindu widow. Whenever I hear men recounting their misfortunes, the picture of the widow comes vividly before my eyes and I laugh at the man who bewails his misfortunes.

Self-control has been carried by Hinduism to the greatest height and, in a widow's life, it reaches perfection. Man can find a remedy for his misfortunes, which are usually the consequence of his own folly. Much of his misery is due merely to greed. But what of the widow? She, poor woman, is in no way responsible for her misfortune. Nor is the remedy for it open to her, for custom has barred that door. A great many widows do not even look on their suffering as suffering. Renunciation has become second nature to them, and to renounce it would be painful to them. They find happiness in their self-denial.

This is not an undesirable state. On the contrary, it is good. It is Hinduism at its best. I regard the widow's life as an ornament to Hinduism. When I see a widow, I instinctively bow my head in

[1] *Vide* also Vol. XVII, pp. 398 & 423-5.

reverence. I never regard the sight of a widow as an ill omen. I feel blessed if I see the face of one in the morning. A widow's blessing is to me a gift which I prize. Seeing her, I forget all my sorrows. Man is but a clod before her. A widow's patient suffering is impossible to rival. Compared to her inheritance of ages, of what worth is a man's self-acquired wealth of brief renunciation?

If a widow suffers, before whom can she pour out her grief? If there is anyone in this world before whom she can do so, it is her mother. But what is the use? What help can the mother give? All she can do is to ask her to be patient and go and attend to her work. For a widow, her mother's house is no longer her home. She must live with her father-in-law's family. Only a daughter-in-law knows what it is to be harassed by a mother-in-law. A widow's duty is to serve others. The brother-in-law, the mother-in-law, the father-in-law and every chance visitor—she must serve them all. She is never weary. She only prays for strength to enable her to serve better.

If this holy life lived by widows becomes a thing of the past, if this living image of service is destroyed through ignorance or pride, incalculable harm will be done to Hinduism.

How can this way of life for widows be kept alive? What share of the virtues of following it can be claimed by parents who marry off a daughter only ten years old? Can the girl who becomes a widow on the very day she is married be regarded as a widow? Are we not committing an unforgivable sin by regarding as dharma the extreme length to which the rules about a widow's life are carried? If this way of life is to be kept alive, is it not essential that the men give thought to their own duty? Can a woman, who is innocent of what widowhood means, possess a body that can follow the widow's life? Who can imagine how a girl married today feels? What is her father's duty towards her? Or, was it over when he put a knife to her throat?

It is my humble opinion that the following rules are necessary for preserving the sanctity of the widow's life, for preserving Hinduism and for order in Hindu society.

1. No father should get a daughter under the age of 15 married.
2. If a girl below this age has already been married and has become a widow, it is the father's duty to get her married again.
3. If a fifteen-year-old girl becomes a widow within a year of her marriage, her parents should encourage her to marry again.
4. Every member of the family should look upon the widow with the utmost respect. Parents or parents-in-law must provide her with the means of improving her knowledge.

I have not suggested these rules to be generally followed. They are to serve only as a guide. I am convinced that our duty towards widows is along the lines indicated in them.

Who should ensure that these rules are followed? In Hindu society, castes are the natural agencies for this purpose. But till such time as they are reformed, what should those parents do who are ready to follow these rules? They should make efforts to persuade their community to introduce reforms and, if they do not succeed, free themselves from the shackles of the caste and search for a suitable bridegroom for the widow. Both the parties should be ready to live outside the caste and appeal to its members from outside. They should do nothing which would shock the leaders, nor should they think of resorting to satyagraha; if at all they want to offer satyagraha, they should understand that staying humbly outside the caste is in itself satyagraha. If the marriage had been thought of as the only possible course in the circumstances, if the motive behind it was to live a life of self-control and if the ostracized family's life is blameless in every way, then the elders will not only take them back into the caste, but will also accept this reform and other poor widows will be spared the torture which would have been theirs otherwise.

Such reforms cannot be brought about immediately, but it is enough if their seeds are sown. In time, the seeds will surely grow into trees.

I have suggested only a minor reform. I have done this because a really big reform may seem impossible. This reform would be that, man too, like woman, should not remarry after the death of his partner. If we understand the true meaning of Hinduism, we would not reduce the rigour of a restraint which is difficult to practise, but would on the contrary introduce in our lives other similar restraints and thus practise the former more rigidly. If widowers do not marry again, widows would not feel life to be a burden, and marriages of ill-matched pairs and of children which are so common today would stop.

There is in all this one danger which we should guard against. I have heard the following argument: "The widow's customary life is a great ideal in every way. Why, then, bother to get a few child-widows remarried? We want even widowers to refrain from marrying again. Besides, we want the custom of child-marriage also to end. It is not necessary, therefore, to encourage widows to remarry under any circumstances." This is a dangerous argument, for it is mere sophistry. It resembles an argument put forward by some British friends: "You believe in non-violence and want us also

to practise non-violence. Hence, no matter what force we use, you ought not to ask your people to resist us with force." This is what some of them tell me. The fallacy in this reasoning is plain enough. All of us commit similar fallacies knowingly or unknowingly. The British friends who argue in this way forget that I wish to teach non-violence to both parties. But how can I advocate non-violence to those who are incapable of understanding it, who are, in other words, cowardly? I could not convince my son of the duty of remaining non-violent. Nor could I get it accepted by the poor and harassed villagers of Bettiah.[1] I had to tell them: "If your choice lies between running away and leaving a woman to her fate or defending her by force against a miscreant, if you cannot, resolutely, remain where you are and, looking upon him as your brother and using no force against him, oppose him with satyagraha unto death, then by all means attack him with force and defend the woman." The path of satyagraha is not for cowards. It is only when a person has shed his cowardice and become a man that he is fit for the method of non-violence.

If we now examine the sophistic argument in regard to widows, we shall see that only widowers who are ready to remain unmarried have a right to advance it. Others who do not appreciate the idea of a widower remaining unmarried or who, though they appreciate the idea itself, are not ready to act upon it, have no right to use that as an argument for defending the custom of compelling widows to remain unmarried. Imagine a sixty-year-old man, who had remarried, cheerfully contemplating the possibility of his nine-year-old wife, so-called, becoming a widow, writing admiringly in his will about her state, saluting his poor child-wife doomed to be a widow and saying: "If, through misfortune, I die before my most virtuous wife, my partner in dharma, I know that she will remain a widow and shed glory on me, on my and her parents' families and on the Hindu way of life. Having married this girl, I have realized that a widower should remain unmarried. I would have done better if I had done so. I admit my weakness. But a man's weakness adds to the lustre of a widow's life. Concerning my child-wife, therefore, I desire that, after my death, she should remain a widow and illustrate the glory of self-control." What effect will this argument have on that child-widow or on those who read the will?

It was necessary to examine this argument, since, under cover or in the name of loyalty to a noble ideal, many unholy practices

1 Vide Vol. XIX, pp. 88-91.

which have the appearance of being holy are defended. The definition of a widow can have no reference to child marriages. A widow means a woman who, at the proper age, married a person of her choice or was married to him with her consent, who has had relations with her husband, and who has then lost her husband. A wife who has not known consummation of marriage or a girl of tender age sacrificed by her parents cannot and must not be included in this definition. It is, therefore, perversity to defend the custom forcing girls to submit to their so-called widowhood. But, when men advocate enforced widowhood for girls by admitting the necessity of widowers, too, remaining unmarried, they add either impudence or profound ignorance to their perversity.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 4-5-1924

389. WHO WILL SAVE?

I got this letter[1] after I had written the article "Renunciation Personified". Such instances are of frequent occurrence in the country. It is difficult to make an elderly man, who is a slave to his passions and has come forward to destroy the life of a girl, to agree to abandon this idea. As for the girl's father, who probably expects to get some money, how can one bring him to see his daughter's good? Where lust and selfishness blind men's eyes, who can open them?

However, if the leaders of the caste wish, they can save this helpless girl. If they are not ready to do anything in the matter, someone inclined to do this act of charity should persuade them to intervene. If even this is not possible, then those who wish to prevent this horrible deed should courteously plead with the girl's father and also with the man who wishes to marry her. In any case, they must break off relations with them. They should refuse to join dinners and other functions and thus save themselves from being partners in their sin. The whole society in which such crimes occur must share the blame for them, because no one would dare to do anything against which there is a strong public opinion. And when any person has the arrogance to disregard the limits laid

[1] Not translated here; the correspondent had described in the letter his unsuccessful efforts to prevent the marriage of a young girl to a man of about 50.

down by society, the latter has the splendid weapon of satyagraha ready at hand. It can employ it and be free of its responsibility.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-5-1924

390. HINDUS AND MUSLIMS

I was not, and still am not, inclined to express my ideas about the bitterness between Hindus and Muslims. My views have of course been formed, but I have not stated them in public as yet out of consideration for friends. The delay on my part is due to the fact that they are still thinking over the matter. But now that this distressing incident has occurred in Visnagar, I cannot remain altogether silent. If I want to continue as the editor of a journal, I must, when the occasion demands, express my views.

Shri Mahadev Desai has given me a heart-rending account of how Abbas Saheb and he failed in their attempt to bring about a reconciliation. It seems that on *Ramnavami* day the Hindus took out a procession of Rama and, of course, there was music on the occasion. As the procession approached a mosque, they saw Muslims with drawn swords ready to meet them. The procession could pass the spot only under police protection twenty-four hours later.

I leave out other incidents. Hindus would not give up their right to play music and Muslims would not permit it. Somehow, a riot was prevented. But neither party deserves credit for this. It goes to the police.

And now we hear that someone has secretly inflicted wounds with a sword on some cattle. One animal was found to have died of the wounds. Hindus have broken off their relations with Muslims.

After the affair of the procession, Shri Mahasukhlal Chunilal, a well-known gentleman of Visnagar, delivered a speech in which he used strong language. In the course of it, he referred to white-capped men and said that, however much they might try, they would not succeed in bringing about Hindu-Muslim unity. Shri Mahasukhlal has advised Hindus to resort to non-co-operation.

In Visnagar, Hindus are more numerous than Muslims, and yet they fear the latter very much. The Muslims, on their part, do not wish to sheathe their swords.

To my knowledge, there is no religious injunction that requires the continuous play of music in a procession. I also think that it is

the duty of Hindus to cease playing at certain times in order to avoid hurting Muslims. But I am equally convinced that to stop playing music out of fear of Muslim swords is wrong. Just as the Hindus should not use force to stop the Muslims from killing cows, so the latter should not use it to stop the former from playing music. If both parties value unity, they will on their own stop killing cows or playing music. I am also of the view that, even if one party does not do its duty, the other party should not fail to do its own. Neither side, however, will submit, ought to submit to force, even if it is totally destroyed in consequence.

Everyone has a right, if the occasion demands, to resort to peaceful non-co-operation. There is no reason why this method should be used only against the Government and not among ourselves. Nor is there any reason why it may be employed by Hindus against Muslims or *vice versa*, but not by Hindus against Hindus and Muslims against Muslims. On a matter of principle, non-co-operation may become necessary even between father and son.

The question is whether such an occasion has in fact arisen for the Hindus of Visnagar. In my humble opinion, it has not. Hindus and Muslims cannot solve complicated problems in their towns by taking the law into their own hands. Even if the immediate result seems satisfactory to the winning side, the permanent consequences are bound to be disastrous. Moreover, if in a town one party happens to win, it does not mean that all members of the community will gain from this victory. Hindus, being in a majority in Visnagar, may succeed, with the help of the Government or through non-co-operation, in having the upper hand over Muslims, but what will be the gain? Will the Hindus of Visnagar like it if in other places Muslims take similar advantage of favourable circumstances to suppress the Hindus? If this will not be to their taste, is it likely that Muslims in other places will be pleased with the discomfiture of Muslims in Visnagar? Though the policy adopted by Hindus in Visnagar may be pleasant in the beginning, it is certain to be harmful in the long run and, therefore, ought to be rejected as advised by the *Gita*.[1]

I need not remind the Hindus of Visnagar that I am not asking them to submit to force and give up their right to play music. Nor am I telling them that they should never resort to non-co-operation. But I certainly state my view, in all humility, that,

[1] XVIII, 37-38

if the report I was given is correct, the Hindus' plan to start non-co-operation is much too hasty. They have not exhausted other means which they should have tried before deciding on this step. If they are wise, they will have as little recourse as possible to the authorities. I hear that the latter in Visnagar have handled the situation with patience and tact and without taking sides. I write this on the basis of what I have heard from an impartial Hindu. I do not know yet what the effect on the mind of an impartial Muslim is likely to have been.

In any case, we want to have as little recourse to authority as possible. We have cherished this principle for the last four years. We must, therefore, consider what step we can take other than inviting intervention by the authorities. The Hindus of Visnagar have no reason now to fear the swords of the Muslims. The authorities have protected them against that threat and continue to do so. They must now look for some means of reconciliation. Have they consulted Hindus and Muslims outside Visnagar? Have they written to the Ali Brothers? Have they written to Hakimji? Perhaps these two may not do anything, but it is the duty of Hindus to seek their help. Have the Hindus obtained the permission of Vallabhbhai, who is the leader of Gujarat? They refused to listen to Abbas Saheb and insulted him. Have they apologized to him and sought his advice?

But Shri Mahasukhlal says that Hindus and Muslims can never live in amity, that the Hindus must look after themselves. If they listen to the white-capped gentry, he says, they [the Hindus] will by and by become Muslims. I would humbly say to this gentleman that his ideas, if correctly reported, are mistaken. Among people wearing white caps are both Hindus and Muslims. I assure him that Hindus who wear white caps will not cease to be Hindus. But our dispute is not over white or black caps. Maybe people who wear white caps are a bad lot. Who am I to defend them? One's conduct alone can be one's defence. But the idea that there can never be unity between Hindus and Muslims seems to me a terrible one. It is wrong from the religious point of view. It is opposed to the Hindu cultural tradition; according to Hinduism, no one is destined to perish, which means that there is the same *atman* in all beings. The Hindu does not insist that only those who believe in the same ideas as he does will go to heaven. I do not know if Muslims believe that. But even if Muslims believe that Hindus, being Kaffirs, are not fit to go to heaven, the Hindu religion teaches them to bear love for Muslims and bind them to themselves with that chain. For Hinduism looks down upon

no religion. On the contrary, it tells every man: "Your good lies in following your own religion."

From the practical point of view also, to believe that Hindu-Muslim unity is impossible is to accept slavery for all time. If any Hindu imagines that the seven crores of Muslims in India can be wiped out, I have no hesitation in asserting that he slumbers in profound ignorance.

Moreover, merely because Hindus and Muslims of Visnagar are fighting, why should we believe that they are doing the same thing in all the seven hundred thousand villages of India in which the two communities live side by side? There are many villages in every part of the country in which Hindus and Muslims live like brothers and are even oblivious of the fact that, in certain towns and villages in their neighbourhood, the two communities are at loggerheads.

Examining in this way both the moral and the practical aspects, the wiser among the Hindus of Visnagar should see that unity between Hindus and Muslims is both possible and indispensable. I would also beg leave to inform the gentleman who is advising non-co-operation [with Muslims] that the ultimate aim of non-co-operation is co-operation. Non-co-operation is a process of self-purification. In this world, the creation of one God, permanent non-co-operation with any human being is unthinkable. The idea is not to be entertained, for it is opposed to the conception of God as the Lord of all. I, therefore, appeal to the Hindus of Visnagar to invite Vallabhbhai and Abbas Saheb and ask them to settle the dispute. If they have no confidence in these two non-co-operators, let them invite any persons belonging to the party of co-operators. There are many such persons among Hindus and Muslims in Gujarat who will help them. As long as the Hindus of Visnagar have not exhausted all other reasonable means of settling the dispute, they have no right to resort to non-co-operation.

So much for the Hindus.

The Muslims have committed a serious error; Muslim history tells us that Islam's glory has not been maintained by the sword. The sword may have defended Islam, but Islam has never decided issues of justice and injustice by the sword. There has been no instance in the world till now of a religion which flourished merely on the strength of the sword. Though not a Muslim, I would certainly tell the Muslims of Visnagar that it is a bad habit to draw the sword on the slightest provocation and that it destroys religion. It is the fakirs, sufis and philosophers who won glory for Islam. It

is proved by Muslim writings that they defended themselves or their religion not with the sword but by their soul-force.

The Muslims of Visnagar should sheathe their swords forthwith. They cannot prevent Hindus from playing music before mosques by the threat of the sword. Hindus have been playing music for the last 30 or 40 years and it will not be easy to stop them all at once. In any case, it is certain that they cannot be stopped by the sword. Others feel just as we feel—this is a universal law. If Hindus try to secure their rights from Muslims by force, the latter will not yield. Similarly, nothing can be forcibly wrested from the Hindus either. The Muslims of Visnagar should calmly think over this.

I would not say that, since Hindus have been playing music for 40 years, they should not now be prevented from doing so even if they have been in the wrong. A wrong does not become right because it has been going on for a long time. But matters can be set right not by means of the sword but by persuasion. If the Hindus of Visnagar are in the wrong, they must be shown their mistake. They should be won over by persuasion. If they do not understand and continue to play music, the Muslims' prayers will not go in vain for that reason. Whether prayers will have their fruit or go in vain depends on the worshipper's sincerity. I have read that the Prophet could pray undisturbed even in the midst of battle, in the din of clashing swords, the neighing of horses and the hiss of arrows. It was with love that he won the hearts of the idol-worshippers of Mecca.

Why do the Muslims of Visnagar forget this heritage, the illustrious example of the Prophet? I have read in the Koran that it is obligatory upon Muslims to say prayers, but I have neither read nor heard that it is their right or their duty to prevent others forcibly from playing music nearby. They can appeal to the Hindus with love. If the latter will not listen, they can ask Hindus and Muslims outside Visnagar to help. The Muslims have no other course, nor have the Hindus, but reconciliation.

Do not the Muslims of Visnagar desire the country's freedom? Do they prefer slavery? Have Indian Muslims completely discharged their duty in the matter of the Khilafat? Can Muslims living in slavery really serve the cause of the Khilafat? Can they bring lustre to the Khilafat unless they cultivate sincere friendship with Hindus? Granting that the Khilafat problem is no more with them, do they want to live in India, their homeland, always as enemies of their fellow-countrymen, the Hindus? We will discuss in *Navajivan* many other questions concerning Hindus and

Muslims. But about one thing we must immediately make up our minds, that any dispute between the two must be resolved only with the help of a *panch* or in a court. Drawing of swords against each other in the name of religion or under any other pretext must be ruled out. Just as it does not become the Hindus to be always afraid of the Muslims, so also it does not become the Muslims to try to intimidate the Hindus. Both those who intimidate others and those who are afraid do wrong. I cannot say which of the two is better, but, if obliged to choose, I would certainly join the side which is afraid and resort to total non-co-operation against the other side. God will look with mercy on a man who is afraid, but I am certain that He will show the door to the other for his pride.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 4-5-1924

391. MY NOTES

The Meaning of "Bhaiya"

Like men, words too cannot but suffer from association. The word *Lala* in its original sense indicates respect. We use it to show respect to a Punjabi. If a Gujarati, however, is addressed as "Surati Lala", he will be offended. The term *Babu* also is used for respect, but because the British called their Bengali servants "Babus" (I do not know if they still do so), it came to imply contempt. The same thing is now happening to the beautiful word *Bhaiya*. *Bhaiya* means brother. Only one who has lived in the U.P. or Bihar can appreciate its sweetness. But we in Bombay started using it for servants hailing from Northern India and then came to address all Hindus coming from the North by that word. In consequence, as a friend from that side informs me, the word is disliked by Hindus and there have been some disagreeable results. They are even trying to prevent the use of the word *Bhaiya* in this context, and I think they are right. There is no community named *Bhaiya* in North India or anywhere else. It is not known how the term came to be used in this sense. But we can realize that it is disliked by business people and others from the North who have settled in Bombay and elsewhere. We should, therefore, give up using the word. My correspondent also informs me that the word has been used in *Navajivan* too. The writer had referred to Jabar as a *Bhaiya* while praising his skill, singleness of

mind and sincerity. In the Ashram, everyone holds Jabar in great respect. But I see now that the use of *Bhaiya*, even as a term of endearment, should henceforth be avoided.

MILL CLOTH

There is, in the national movement, an insidious attempt to give mill cloth the place of khadi. This shows that the significance and importance of khadi have not yet been sufficiently understood. The khadi movement did not spring from hostility to mills, it has been inspired by compassion for the poor. It has been conceived as a means of securing swaraj, and to me it is the very breath of swaraj. India cannot live without it. How can a dead country be free? Imagine India in the form of an enormous body. How will the brain in the head of this body know the growing heaviness of the feet? We, who are relatively healthy, do not realize the steady ruin of the villages. But economists and those who frequently go to the villages can see that the feet of this huge body of India are becoming enfeebled. This enfeeblement continues apace. And the means by which to check it is khadi, not mill cloth. Indian mills may make the boycott of foreign cloth possible, but they can never, never indeed, remove the hunger of crores of famished men and women. This only khadi can do. In India there is scarcity of money because there is lack of work. It is not enough that employment is available in cities. The seven lakh villages have to be freed. Villagers need employment in their own villages. This only the spinning-wheel can provide. That is why I describe it as *Annapurna*[1]. This spinning-wheel, then, is what we should popularize. By the spinning-wheel I mean all the processes connected with it, those which precede and those which follow spinning. We can succeed in popularizing it only if thousands take up the work. Our task is simply to organize the khadi movement properly.

Mills are already well organized. They do not need voluntary workers. The diamond merchant will find his way. There is no need to organize bands of volunteers to assist him. The same is true about mills. Indian mills can, if they choose, end the import of foreign cloth. If they would give less importance to enriching themselves and give the first place to the country's welfare, introduce honesty into their business, pay greater attention to improving their product than to their profits, there is no doubt that their sales would be far greater than at present. Khadi does not at this

[1] Goddess of plenty, a beneficent form of Durga

stage compete with them. It may have had some indirect effect but, so long as we have not produced khadi worth even a crore of rupees, where is the question of competition? Khadi has not yet won a stable position for itself. Unless Herculean efforts are made, it cannot recover its ancient dignity. In these circumstances, it passes my understanding how it can be so much as mentioned in the same breath with mill cloth.

The Congress is or, at any rate, should be, the voice of the inarticulate. Its proper sphere of work is among the poorest classes, but it does not and cannot reach them. Hence it tries to wake up those who without knowing it are riding on the back of these; it exerts itself to produce khadi for these [better-off] people to wear. I have, therefore, no doubt that, for the members of the Congress and for those whom the voice of the Congress can reach, the use of mill cloth is forbidden.

I have always sought the help of mill-owners in this task. They should sincerely accept khadi, encourage it and personally use it in place of mill cloth, thus identifying themselves with the poor. There is no contradiction in this. For the present at least, mill cloth has a place in the country. Even if, by the grace of God, the whole country becomes a land of khadi, what have the mill-owners to fear? They will have their export trade. Suppose foreign countries also become self-sufficient in cloth, what even then? The mill-owners' ability for earning wealth will not have been lost. There will always be need in the country for producing wealth, and the rich will certainly continue to have a place in it. It will be enough if there is a change of heart in them. Their love of money will then go with more of compassion than at present. To-day, concern with morality is subordinate to wealth, instead of which wealth will become subordinate to such concern. This will be for the good of the rich too, as it assuredly will be for the good of the masses.

As long as khadi has not been adopted universally, this happy state of affairs will not be achieved and, if khadi is to be so adopted, it should be recognized beyond dispute that those who are working in this movement can have no use for cloth other than khadi. It is because this is not plain to all that the spread of khadi is slow, people take up the spinning-wheel for a time and stop, start again and stop. This is also why people do not stock cotton, why carding has not become popular, why most people wear khadi merely for show and, in the home, use mill cloth or foreign cloth. As long as this uncertainty prevails, it will be necessary to insist that mill cloth should not be used.

The Late Ramabai Ranade

The name of Ramabai Ranade is not as well known in Gujarat as it is in Maharashtra. This lady brought lustre to the name of the late Justice Ranade. Her death is a great loss to the country.

Few women have lived their lives as widows as worthily as Ramabai did. Search where we will in the country, we shall not find an institution the equal of the Seva Sadan of Poona. Here a thousand women and girls receive education in various fields. The Seva Sadan could never have acquired such prestige but for the single-minded devotion of Ramabai. She gave her whole life to this one task.

A widow's life in itself means a life of single-minded devotion. The wife's constancy connotes the purest loyalty. Ordinary loyalty relates to the body and dies with it. The loyalty of the woman living as a widow is to the husband's spirit. By giving a religious significance to the state of widowhood, Hinduism has shown that marriage is not a physical but a spiritual union. Ramabai had married Ranade's soul and she kept this union of souls unbroken. For this reason she took up from among the causes which were dear to him (her husband) a task which was within her capacity. Dedicating herself wholly to it, she taught people the full meaning of widowhood. In this way, Ramabai, through her work, rendered priceless service to women. When I was in the Sassoon Hospital, Col. Maddock told me that good Indian nurses were trained in that hospital, that the trainees came from the Seva Sadan and were in great demand all over the country. If widows wish to take up work, there are many fields open to them. Spinning alone can fill the leisure of hundreds of rich widows. Is there any widow who does not know from experience that the spinning-wheel is the support of the poor? I have here suggested one beneficent activity which can be universally adopted. There are many others like it to which rich widows can give their time, with a view to helping to train poor widows and other needy women.

Cultivators of Supa[1]

A gentleman from Kaliawari[2] writes as follows.[3]

This letter is worth reading and pondering over. It shows that the country is a land of gold. That the agriculturists should

[1] & [2] Villages in the Surat district of Gujarat

[3] The letter is not translated here; it describes the reluctance on the part of the farmers of Supa and other villages to spin yarn in their own village from the good cotton grown there.

not understand the value of an activity which is of profit to themselves is a painful, but not surprising, state of affairs. They have followed their methods for a long time and so cannot grasp elementary economic facts. The higher the price for cotton which they get, the more will they have to spend for their cloth. This is simple and straightforward arithmetic, but how can we expect them to understand it? If a child has been taught by some teacher a wrong method of doing a sum, he will always get wrong answers. If, now, another teacher tries to correct the error, he will be laughed at. Such is our pitiful condition today. We have been taught a wrong method, with the result that to us the right method seems wrong and the wrong seems right. It was such phenomena that Shankaracharya described as *maya*.

In these circumstances, the only thing for voluntary workers is to have patience. They must never be angry with cultivators. What their condition is today, ours was yesterday. They will certainly understand their interest. Just as they keep back enough grain for their own use, why should they not store cotton too? If they are too well-off to spin or weave, they may get others to do the work for them. Even the wealthy do not follow such an absurd rule where grain is concerned. They get it cooked in their own homes and do not buy food from the bazaar. In fact, buying food from the bazaar is considered improper for a respectable man. This used to be the feeling in regard to cloth also. Why should it not be so again?

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 4-5-1924

392. NEGLECT OF THE CHARKHA

A gentleman writes from Kashi that our going into the local boards, etc., has done us no good whatever; in fact, it has put a stop to constructive work. He also says that these people are apathetic towards the charkha. Many people do not also have faith in the charkha. When one says anything to these people, they answer: "We have got on the board on Gandhiji's advice."

First I do not want that anyone should do anything on my advice. Whatever people do, they should do according to their own judgment. We wish to be free. We do not wish to be slaves of anyone, however influential he may be. My own opinion is that it is not so very necessary to go to the local boards, etc. If we do

go there, we should do so solely with the intention of furthering constructive work. If, however, it is not possible to carry on constructive work properly there, we should keep away from these institutions.

I know that many non-co-operators have no faith in the power of the charkha. There is only one way of convincing them: that those who have faith in the charkha should ply it with the greatest zest and encourage others. It is my firm belief that without the charkha it is impossible to secure or retain swaraj. True, it may be that all of us do not mean the same thing by swaraj. To me it has but one meaning: *the eradication of the poverty of India and freedom for every man and woman*. Ask the starving men and women of India. They say that their swaraj is their bread. Agriculture alone cannot feed the tens of millions of Indian peasants. They need additional help from some industry or other. The charkha alone can provide such a universal industry. "A starving man cannot think of God."

Another gentleman writes to say that something should be done to provide livelihood to those who have given up their trades on account of the non-co-operation movement. It is and it is not a difficult question to solve at once. If everyone comes to understand the secret of constructive work, the question of starving does not arise at all. But if faith in constructive work is lacking, starvation will remain a perpetual problem. It is my firm belief that he who has faith in the charkha and the handloom can easily find a livelihood. The difficulties of the middle classes in the country can only be solved through industry. We have a number of bad customs. We shall have to give them up. If only one man labours and there are ten who do nothing, we cannot get a living out of weaving. Also, we should not keep looking up to the Congress all the time. Swaraj should mean this, too, that we become self-supporting. This is what one may call faith in oneself. Lord Krishna, the lover of his devotees, has laid down in the *Bhagavad Gita* one condition for the livelihood of every man. He who wants to appease his hunger should fulfil this condition. *Yajna* means a number of things. One important thing it means is labour. He who eats but performs no labour is a thief, in the words of the Lord.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 4-5-1924

393. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Sunday night, Vaisakha Sud 1 [May 4, 1924][1]

CHI. VASUMATI,

You need not stop writing to me. On the contrary, if there is no letter from you, I would feel perplexed. It will be enough if I have the freedom to reply at my convenience. I am getting better.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the original Gujarati: C.W. 614. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

394. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

PALM BUN, JUHU,
P.O. ANDHERI,
Sunday [On or after *May 4, 1924*][2]

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Your being unhappy has made me also unhappy. I avoided the use of *Chi.* in the letter[3] to you, because I sent it unsealed, and because I could not decide just then as to the propriety or otherwise of the prefix *Chi.* as applied to you being read by all those who happened to see the letter. I therefore used *Bhai.* How are we to decide whether you are fit to be a *Chi.* or whether I deserve to take the place of father to you? As you have doubts about yourself, so do I have about myself. If you are imperfect, so am I. I had to take thought about my own fitness before agreeing to be a father to you. In agreeing to be that, I yielded to your love. May God make me worthy of that position. If any deficiencies remain in you, they will be evidence of the failure of my touch. I am confident that, if we try, both of us will succeed. Even if we fail, God who is hungry only for our devotion and can look into the innermost recesses of our heart, will deal with us according to our deserts. I will, therefore, continue to look upon you as *Chi.* as long as I do not consciously harbour impurity in myself.

[1] *Vaisakha Sud* 1 in 1924 fell on May 4.

[2] The letter under reply was dated May 3; the Sunday following it fell on May 4, 1924.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Jamnalal Bajaj", on or before 2-5-1924.

I shall observe silence today till one o'clock. I have asked Pandit Sunderlal to come at six in the evening. I shall wire to you if, after seeing him, it seems necessary to call you here.

The climate there, I hope, is agreeable. Manibehn has gone to Hajira. Radha, it can be said, is much better. Kikibehn too is all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: G.N. 2847

395. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

Sunday [On or after *May 4, 1924*][1]

CHI. MANI,

I have your letter. This is my fourth letter to you. Before this, I have written one letter and two postcards. But you have acknowledged only one card.

Self-confidence remains unshaken even when things look hopeless. If I have faith in truth and non-violence, I would stick to them even in the hour of crisis. Even if you get fever, you must not give up hope. We may not ignore it, but we must not worry either. I am eager to see your comments on "Tyagamurti". Don't forget to write to me regularly.

Can you accommodate any person there? If you can, I would like to send Vasumatibehn.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro–Manibehn Patelne, p. 16

[1] "Tyagamurti", that is, "Renunciation Personified", referred to in the letter, was published in *Navajivan*, 4-5-1924.

396. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

Monday, May 5, 1924

CHI. MANI,

I eagerly waited yesterday for a letter from you, as the *chataka* bird waits for rain, and the first letter I read after the morning prayer today was yours. Devdas told me that your letter had been received last evening.

Bhai . . . writes to say that, though you feel tired, your health is better there than it used to be here. If this improvement continues, we shall all leave this place and seek resort there. How I wish that Durgabehn too should regain her health there! Ask her to write to me. Mahadev's visit to Madras has been cancelled. He has already returned to Sabarmati.

Write to me if you want anything from here. Even a mother will not serve [food to her child] unless asked for. As a matter of fact, it is the mother who will not serve. Others must observe ceremony. A mother has no time for doing this. She is, actually, a living embodiment of ceremony. As you know, I am trying to be such a mother [to you].

Radha and Kikibehn are pretty well. Their temperature does not go above 99°.

Shaukat Ali was here for a couple of days.

Blessings from
BAPU

MANIBEHN VALLABHBHAI PATEL
KHIMJI ASAR VIRJI SANATORIUM
HAJIRA, *via* SURAT

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–Manibehn Patelne, p. 14

397. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

[After *May 5, 1924*][1]

CHI. MANI,

It is a great relief to me that your letters now come regularly. Have patience and self-confidence. Self-confidence will do more good than medicines. Prabhudas has dropped the idea of going to Panchgani. Chi. Radha is all right. She attends the evening prayer. Kikibehn does not show any improvement. Chi. Girdhari left for Ahmedabad yesterday.

Blessings from
BAPU

CHI. MANIBEHN VALLABHBHAI PATEL
HAJIRA, *via* SURAT

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne, p. 15

398. LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR

ANDHERI,
Tuesday, May 6, 1924

DEAR MR. JAYAKAR,

Mr. Bhonsle of the Depressed Classes Mission writes to me saying that you would tell me all about their proposed temple and boarding house. If you are interested in the matter, I would be thankful to be guided by you. They want me to finance the project partly or wholly. I do not know what to do. I hope Mrs. Jayakar is improving.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

The Story of My Life, Vol. II, p. 269

[1] From the reference to Radha's health, this letter appears to have been written after the letter to Manibehn Patel dated May 5; *vide* the preceding item.

399. *LETTER TO QUMAR AHMED*

POST ANDHERI,
May 6, 1924

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter undated, but I know it was received some time ago. I am sorry I have not been able to read it earlier.

I am not indifferent towards lawyers and schoolmasters. It is because my whole heart is with them that I find it difficult to advise them. No disgrace can possibly be attached to a man who changes his attitude regarding a particular thing from conviction. A lawyer or a schoolmaster who gave [up] his calling at my bidding would be still less blameworthy if, finding me a broken reed, [he] has gone back to his profession. I should be extremely sorry to discover, however, that lawyers and schoolmasters, instead of thinking for themselves, simply did what I said, although I vehemently argued that no one should non-co-operate unless he was convinced of the necessity and the propriety of it. How shall I say to a man, who conscientiously feels that it is wrong to practise before the British Law Courts or serve in British schools, that he should rejoin his profession; and how and why should I prevent those who have no conscientious scruple from rejoining it? I am quite aware that many pleaders were doing useful public work whilst they were practising. The work that we are now called upon to do is, in my opinion, far superior to what we were doing before, and requires much greater sacrifice. A mofussil pleader, who was just earning his maintenance whilst in practice, can do so now if he will qualify himself as a good weaver, and he can at the same time do public work. I wonder if I have now made myself clear.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Q. AHMED, ESQ.
"THE KHILAFAT DAILY"
JACOB CIRCLE
BOMBAY, POST NO. 11

From a photostat: S.N. 8786; also G.N. 5110

400. LETTER TO K. MADHAVAN NAIR

POST ANDHERI,
May 6, 1924

MY DEAR MADHAVAN NAIR,

I have your letter[1] enclosing your thoughts on the Vaikom struggle. There cannot be any question for displeasure over an honest difference of opinion. In the midst of blind assent, which is being given to all, I say your difference of opinion comes to me as a ray of sunshine. I congratulate you upon it, and I would ask you to adhere to your view until you are convinced to the contrary.

Now for your manuscript. You will be surprised to learn that I have not yet read the *Social Reformer*[2] to which you have referred. I always love to read Mr. Natarajan's writings. I have kept even a copy of that number in my file, but I have not been able to read it. It is my misfortune that I read newspapers the least when I am editing the most. Now let us consider the merits. Do you know that, when Kesav Menon started the movement, he told me that the general body of the Hindus was with the movement? Letters received by me after, from other workers, gave me the same impression. Satyagraha is taken up by one who feels that truth is being trampled under foot. He fights against error with only God as his support. He is never in search for any other support. It comes in time, and if it is legitimate, he accepts it. A satyagrahi is pledged to fight single-handed in the face of starvation and worse. Pray read my article again, and you will probably understand my meaning more clearly than you have done. There is no such thing as a settled fact in satyagraha. If you find that you have erred at any stage, it is never too late to retrace your step. If, in Travancore, public opinion is not in favour, you may not overawe the public by a demonstration from outside. You must patiently wait and suffer. Reduce yourselves to the position of the

[1] Nair had sent Gandhiji on May 2 a long note on his views on Gandhiji's article in *Young India*, 1-5-1924, on the Vaikom Satyagraha. He had written in the letter forwarding it: "I hope, in the generosity of your heart, you will pardon me for this difference of opinion. I earnestly entreat you to bestow your consideration on the Vykom question and advise us as to how the fight is to be proceeded with." He had sent copies of his note to *The Hindu* and *Swarajya*, Madras.

[2] *The Indian Social Reformer*, then edited by S. Natarajan

suppressed classes. Live with them and suffer their humiliation. You are the first person to tell me that the public in Travancore are not with you.

If you are fighting as an enlightened Hindu against the bigoted Hindu, it is your bounden duty not only not to seek but respectfully to reject all support from non-Hindus. Surely, I do not need to prove the truth of such a simple proposition. I think I have traversed all the points raised by you in your manuscript. I have placed before you, in all humility, the view of satyagraha as I know it; and since I am the author of the word, you must let me give its meaning, and if you do not accept the meaning, the proper thing is to find another word that will bear your own meaning. But, of course, this is a technical point. Even the author cannot claim any exclusive control over words he may coin or the meanings he may give to them. Once they escape his lips or pen, they are no longer his property.

Do please ask me any questions that may arise out of my letter. I purposely refrain from discussing the future programme in view of the barricading of the roads and the Government's refusal to make any arrest. The preliminary thing now is to understand the meaning of satyagraha and its implications. When that is done, and not before, it is easy to settle the future course of action in the light of the interpretation that may be accepted.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. MADHAVAN NAIR
VAKIL
CALICUT

From a photostat: S.N. 10304; also G.N. 5674

401. LETTER TO V. G. DESAI

ANDHERI,
Tuesday [May 6, 1924][1]

BHAISHRI VALJI,

I have your letter. I am writing,[2] asking them to send you the proofs. I am also asking them to retain your spelling. I do not have a blue pencil at all. What should the uneducated do if every man of letters insists on following his own spelling? Please let me know the reasons why you think your spellings to be the right ones.

Kindly let me have your brother's name and address. I wish to write to him.

I hope you are not under a vow not to purchase new clothes if you do not have enough there. I have seen people sitting in the sun and suffering even when there is the shade of a tree nearby. Are you also like them?

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

PS.

I do not wish that you should undertake any work beyond your strength. When anybody consults me, I just give him names of competent persons. My responsibility ends there.

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: C.W. 6001. Courtesy: V. G. Desai

402. LETTER TO SWAMI ANANDANAND

Tuesday [May 6, 1924][3]

BHAISHRI ANANDANAND,

Here is Valji's salute. He wants to see the proofs. He insists on his spelling being retained. According to the saying, "even a kick from a milch cow is welcome", we have to accept all his conditions. His pamphlet can be published only next week. I am

[1] The postmark carries the date "7 May '24".

[2] For the letter to the Navajivan Press, *vide* the following item.

[3] This letter was evidently written the same day as the preceding one.

sending it to you immediately on receiving it, so that you may be able to send the proofs to him.

What is the name of Valji's brother? And his address?

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand: G.N. 7754

403. LETTER TO V. G. DESAI

Tuesday [After *May 6, 1924*][1]

BHAISHRI VALJI,

I had your letter. You must have noticed that one half of it has been dealt with in *Navajivan*. Your suggestion therein to reserve one column of *Navajivan* is rather tall. You may take it this time. It will give you an opportunity to read all the issues of *Navajivan*.

Let me know your brother's qualifications and what pay he expects.

Herewith a typed copy of your article with sufficient space for corrections and additions so that you may not have to call for the proofs. Go through it and return it immediately so that it may be included in next week's issue.

I do hope you will improve there.

I hope to reach the Ashram towards the end of May.[2]

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati original in Gandhiji's hand : C.W. 6203. Courtesy : V. G. Desai

[1] In the letter dated 6-5-1924, Gandhiji had inquired about the name and address of the addressee's brother who wanted some employment.

[2] Gandhiji arrived at the Ashram on May 29, 1924.

404. LETTER TO GANGABEHN MEGHJI

ANDHERI,
Wednesday [May 7, 1924][1]

PU.[2] GANGABEHN,

I have your letter. I was glad to know that you would be going to the Ashram shortly.

Kaka should certainly visit your place when he goes to Bombay next time. Tell him this when you go to the Ashram.

I hope you have reduced your self-imposed burden of dispensing medicines.

I am writing to Ba about your intending to go to the Ashram. I, too, will go there at the end of this month.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Gangaswarup Gangabehnne, p. 4

405. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

Wednesday [May 7, 1924][3]

CHI. MANI,

I got two of your letters at the same time yesterday. It is not clear whether you get my letters. Instead of writing once a week, I have written a letter to you almost every alternate day. Your fever is bound to go. I think there is nothing to worry about, since you are able to eat and your bowels move. The complaint is old and, therefore, will take time to be cured.

I am waiting for your comments on "Tyagamurti".

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne, p. 17

[1] The postmark carries this date.

[2] Abbreviation for *pujya*, revered

[3] From the reference in the letter to the article "Tyagamurti", this letter appears to have been written subsequent to "Letter to Manibehn Patel", on or after 4-5-1924.

406. *MESSAGE TO THE COUNTRY*[1]

[*March 18, 1922*]

There is no need now for me to give a message. People know what my message is. Tell them that each and every Indian must remain peaceful and make every possible effort to maintain the peace. They must wear only khadi and spin. If they want to secure my release, they should do so only through peace and non-violence. Please remember that if you resort to violence, I would much rather stay in the prison.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 19-3-1922

[1] The message, given by Gandhiji before leaving the Sessions Court, Ahmedabad, on being sentenced, should be read with "Message to the Country"; *vide* p. 121.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

LETTER FROM HAKIM AJMAL KHAN

AHMEDABAD,
March 17, 1922

MY DEAR MAHATMAJI,

I have received the letter which you wrote to me from Sabarmati Jail and thank you very sincerely for the kind sentiments that you have expressed towards me. Whether I really deserve them is another question into which I do not propose to enter.

I am glad that Mr. Shankerlal Banker is with you in the jail. He has great affection for you and possesses qualities which have endeared him to you. I feel sure that his company in jail will be a source of extra pleasure and satisfaction to you.

I can, however, feel happy at your arrest only when I find that, as a mark of the profound respect that it has for you, the country takes still greater interest in the national movement than it did when you were free. But it gives me infinite pleasure to see that the country observed perfect peace on your arrest. This is a clear sign of the spread of the spirit of non-violence in the country, which is as essential for our success as pure air is for life.

I have no doubt that the secret of the progress of our country lies in the unity of the Hindus, the Mussulmans and other races of India. Such a unity should not be based on policy, for that, in my opinion, will only be a kind of armistice which might with difficulty be sufficient for the present requirements. But I clearly see that the two great communities are coming closer to each other every day. And although the number of men whose hearts are absolutely free from any sectarian prejudices may not be very great in the two communities, I feel convinced that the country has found the road to real unity and will advance on it with steady steps towards its goal. So highly do I prize the unity of races inhabiting our country that, if the country gave up all other activities and achieved that alone, I would consider the Khilafat and the swaraj questions automatically solved to our satisfaction. For the achievement of our objects is so intimately connected with this unity that to me the two appear identical.

The question naturally arises, how are we to achieve this living and lasting unity? I can find only one answer to that. We can only achieve it by the sincerity and purity of our hearts. Not until every one of us has driven selfishness out of his mind will our country succeed in achieving its

object. I know that the differences which have been created by a century of this system of Government cannot very soon be eradicated and, therefore, we cannot expect our efforts to bear fruit immediately. But there can be no doubt that we have accomplished the work of generations in months and have actually achieved what the pessimists among us considered impossible of achievement.

I do not consider the question of the Khilafat, in other words, the question of the evolution of Islamic policy, a passing phase. Just as in centuries past, it presented itself in one form or another, so will it in centuries to come. God alone knows how and when it will finally be solved. Therefore, even those who do not believe in Hindu-Muslim unity in the true sense of the term must understand that even as a policy it carries centuries under its arms. It is an admitted fact that looking to the present condition of India, next to Hindu-Muslim unity in importance is the question of non-violence. How far have our efforts, or rather your efforts, been successful in that direction is shown by the progress of events. But the most striking proof of all of our success in that direction is afforded by our North-West Frontier Province where non-violence had the least chance of success. When we find our brethren in that corner of India generally opposing the shield of non-violence to the violent attacks of their opponents, we feel convinced that the spirit of non-violence has spread and is spreading satisfactorily in the country.

Doubts are entertained with regard to the United Provinces in this matter; but my own opinion is that in consequence of the dearth of national workers, the Congress creed has not been sufficiently explained to the people. I feel sure, however, the United Provinces will very soon come up to the level of other Provinces.

If some extraordinary or special causes have occasionally led to violence in some parts of the country, they should afford no ground for despair. We should not be unprepared for such stray cases, when we remember that we have been working with a limited number of workers in the midst of a population of 33 crores and working for eighteen months only. At the same time we should not minimize the significance of such occurrences and concentrate all our efforts on preventing their recurrence. Unity of the races inhabiting India and non-violence are the two essential conditions for the success of the present movement.

Khaddar, too, no doubt is of invaluable help to us in the achievement of our objects. It will demonstrate our unity and show us how far we have advanced towards swaraj. I do not think that picketing is so necessary for popularizing khaddar as the country considers it to be. The country considers it a short cut and spends its limited time over it, although as you yourself have observed, the real work lies in creating in the minds of our people love for home-made things. But so far as I think our Congress Committees have not sufficiently devoted their time and attention to it. This is the reason why they

want to make up for this neglect by adopting the comparatively easier method of picketing. I, however, hope that in future the various Congress Committees would adopt it as their ideal to persuade people to use hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar and prefer it to picketing.

You have also touched upon the question of untouchability in your letter. On the face of it, it might appear to be a communal question. It is really a national question, for, the country as a whole cannot progress until and unless its component parts progress too. It is the duty of every person who has the interest of the country at heart to interest himself in all such questions as affect our national growth. Consequently, everything which comes in the way of the material or moral progress of the country must engage our attention. It is, therefore, as much a Muslim question as Hindu. Similarly, if the Mussulmans are backward in education, every good Hindu should think of their educational advancement, for every step in that direction is a step towards the educational advancement of the country as a whole, even though it may superficially appear to be to the advantage of one community only. I hope, therefore, the country will pay to the question of untouchability the attention that it deserves.

Bardoli and Delhi resolutions invite the country to concentrate its efforts on the constructive programme laid down by you. I hold that if we were to start civil disobedience, we would not have the necessary atmosphere required for the success of the constructive programme. It is very difficult to find a *via media*. I trust the Working Committee will fully consider the question and adopt a proper and suitable course.

Now that we are starting constructive work, we should reorganize the Congress office to suit to our requirements. We should divide the work and create separate departments for different works, each under a member of the Working Committee selected for the purpose.

In the end, I join you in your prayers and wish to assure you that though my failing health will not enable me to be of very great service to my country, it will be my earnest endeavour to discharge my duties until Mr. C. R. Das is once more amongst us. May God help us in the sacred work which you and the country have undertaken for truth and justice, and may your going to jail lead to the achievement of our triple goal.

Young India, 23-3-1922

APPENDIX II

INTERVIEW TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI[1]

Mr. Devdas Gandhi and myself went to Poona on Friday last to see Mahatmaji who, we learnt, was in Yeravda Jail. We were informed by Mr. Thakkar of the Servants of India Society that the Jail Superintendent had orders to allow only one interview in three months. Mahatmaji's son Devdas accompanied by Mr. Thakkar and myself went to the Jail and requested the Superintendent to allow us to see Mahatmaji. We were told that only one of us two, Mr. Thakkar or myself, could accompany Devdas.

The prisoner then was brought down by a warder to the Superintendent's room and we were called in. The Superintendent was in his chair and Mahatmaji standing in front of his table. He had to continue standing throughout the interview.

In answer to questions about his food, Mahatmaji said he was given goat's milk and bread, milk being given all at a time. He had cut down his three meals to two. Asked what he did for fruits, he said he was given 2 oranges a day. Raisins which he had mentioned as a part of his usual diet had not yet been ordered to be given. The Superintendent, however, promised to allow this. Mahatmaji's milk is heated for him on a stove in the yard which some Arab prisoners are using.

Mahatmaji is not allowed to see Mr. Shankerlal who is in the same prison or any other persons or prisoners. Mahatmaji is kept in one of the cells intended for solitary confinement and locked in during nights. The cell has two ventilators, one near the roof and another at the floor. It has a verandah besides which, in day-time, an area marked out for him in the yard is allowed for walking. The nightpot has to be in the same little cell during nights. At our interview the Superintendent promised to replace the crude pot by a commode.

No articles are allowed from outside. Mahatmaji is not allowed even his own bed. He is given as usual 2 jail blankets. I was curious to ask if he had any pillow. He said he had none. When I expressed surprise, the Superintendent interposed that a pillow was a luxury. For utensils the Mahatmaji has the usual jail mug and dish. He is, however, allowed his own spoon, having strongly remonstrated on this subject. The Superintendent said during our interview that, if Mahatmaji applied, he would forward his petition to the Government. He has not been deprived of his writing paper and pen which he is just now using only to learn Urdu by himself. Mahatmaji was in his usual

[1] This took place on Saturday, April 1, 1922.

single loin-cloth. He did not seem to us to be in good health though the Jailor told us that he had gained in weight.

It is clear that, except in the matter of food, to the limited extent mentioned by me, Mahatmaji is treated strictly as a common prisoner under the Bombay Jail Code which in many respects is a worse code than others. Mahatmaji told me that he did not want any complaints to be made about his life in Jail. The fine words uttered by the Judge at the famous trial at Ahmedabad had led us all to hope that the Government of Bombay would treat the great prisoner, if not exactly as he deserved, or as we would want, at least as civilized Government would treat their more important prisoners of war. Our interview, however, rudely awakened us to the realities of the British Indian administration.

The Hindu, 3-4-1922

APPENDIX III

INTERVIEW WITH MAGANLAL GANDHI[1]

I was one of the party that visited Mahatmaji in jail, on the first of this month. . . .

We asked Mahatmaji what his daily routine was. He replied with evident satisfaction that he always got up at 4 a.m. and devoted the morning hours to prayer and meditation. . . . Mahatmaji has no work to do till it is broad daylight, probably because he is given no lamp. Finishing his morning ablutions, he commences his favourite work—spinning and carding. . . .

While relating to us his daily routine, he looked at his feet for fine cotton fibres sticking to his legs. "I am just coming from my carding work", he said.

He took delight in standing all the time we were talking, in spite of our repeated appeals to take one of the chairs that were placed this time for all present, visitors as well as the prisoner. At every appeal, he said he was all right. One could see that the discipline to which he had voluntarily surrendered himself was a luxury for him. . . .

When Mahatmaji heard the warning that was given at the close of the interview that nothing that had transpired should be published, he inquired of the Superintendent with his vanquishing smile, "Not even the fact that letters were stopped by the Governor for reasons best known to him?"

"No."

"Or even that I am well?"

"No, nothing whatsoever," was the reply.

[1] Extracts from Maganlal Gandhi's article: "Mahatmaji's Luxuries in Jail". The interview took place on July 1, 1922.

The prisoner, retracing his steps towards the door, said that he left it to the visitors to decide whether he should lose the privilege of future interviews. . . .

Young India, 20-7-1922

APPENDIX IV

INNER TEMPLE ORDER

The official order of the Inner Temple Bench disbarring Mr. Gandhi runs as follows:

"Inner Temple: At a Parliament holden on Friday, the 10th day of November, 1922.

"Whereas at a Bench Table holden on the 9th day of November 1922 the treasurer having reported that he had received a certified copy of the conviction and sentence to six years' imprisonment of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, a barrister of this Inn, at the court of the Sessions Judge, Ahmedabad, India, on the 18th March, 1922, for sedition.

"It was ordered that the said Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, having been convicted by a competent tribunal of an offence which, in the opinion of the Bench, disqualifies him from continuing a member of the Inn, should have his name removed from the books.

"And at the same Bench Table it was further ordered that at the Parliament to be holden on Friday 10th November, 1922, the said Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi should be disbarred and his name removed from the books of the Society and that this order be communicated to the judges of the Supreme Court of Judicature, to the other Inns of Court, to the General Council of the Bar and by registered letter to the said Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, and be screened in the Hall."

This was confirmed at the Parliament of the Inner Temple held on November 10.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 21-12-1922

APPENDIX V

INTERVIEW IN JAIL

[*September 10, 1923*]

Gandhiji was interviewed in Yeravda Jail on Monday. He has been keeping fairly good health since his last illness three months ago. He is still given milk, bread and fruit, and the diet has been quite agreeable to him so far. Though he looks perfectly bright and healthy, time and deep religious study have not failed to tell upon his general appearance. His weight now is 101 lbs., i.e., 13 lbs. less than his original weight when he was arrested. He spends his time, besides spinning, mainly in a study of the Vedas and Upanishads and Urdu in which he gets the assistance of Mr. Manzarali Sokhta.

Mahatmaji was perfectly amused when told of the speculation in the country about the rumours of his release, and said laughing he would deplore his early release, for it would interrupt his studies.

Young India, 13-9-1923

APPENDIX VI

DREW PEARSON'S INTERVIEW WITH SIR GEORGE LLOYD

On Gandhi Day—just a year and a half after the Mahatma's imprisonment—I visited the gaol near this city where he is confined, and talked with the man who more than anyone else in India was responsible for his arrest. The latter official, whose name I cannot divulge, is one of the highest in India. In words so graphic that I could almost picture the slender figure of Gandhi sitting before him, he described his talks with the Mahatma and the events leading up to the arrest. It was a story which probably few people had heard.

At the height of his campaign of Non-co-operation, my informant had called Gandhi to his office. Gandhi had been staging great bonfires, burning English cloth, had begun a most successful boycott of the schools and courts, and had organized such an effective campaign against the Prince of Wales that the streets down which his procession passed were almost empty.

Then, to use the words of my informant, "Gandhi pattered in here on his little bare feet and sat where you're sitting. And I warned him. 'You don't know what you're doing,' I said, 'but you insist on going ahead with this devilish programme, I'll hold you responsible for every man, woman and child that is killed.'

'There won't be any, Your Excellency,' he said.

'Yes, there will,' I replied. 'You're preaching non-violence, but that's all theory. In practice it won't work out. There's no such thing as non-violence in such a campaign as you are waging. You can't control men's passions. Remember, I hold you responsible.'"

His Excellency shook his finger at me as if I were Gandhi sitting opposite him.

"Gandhi came in again after it was all over—after the riots and murders at Chauri Chaura. And I said :

'I told you what would happen. You are responsible.' He covered his face with his hands and said, 'I know it.'

'You know it! Well, can your knowing it bring back to life the men and women whose heads were ground into dust by the heels of your Indian mob?'

'Put me in gaol, Your Excellency,' he moaned.

'Yes. I will put you in gaol, but not until I get good and ready. Do you think I want to put a crown of thorns on your head?' He said he was going to fast for a week."

A Colossal Experiment

His Excellency paused and leaned back. In a less animated tone, he added :

"Just a thin, spindly shrimp of a fellow he was, but he swayed 319,000,000 people and held them at his beck and call. He didn't care for material things, and preached nothing but the ideals and morals of India. You can't govern a country with ideals. Still that was where he got his grip upon the people. He was their god. India must always have its god. First it was Tilak, then Gandhi now, someone else tomorrow. He gave us a scare. His programme filled our gaols. You can't go on arresting people for ever, you know—not when there are 319,000,000 of them. And if they had taken his next step and refused to pay taxes, God knows where we should have been! Gandhi's was the most colossal experiment in world's history, and it came within an inch of succeeding. But he couldn't control men's passions. They became violent, and he called off his programme. You know the rest. We gaoled him. I saw him three days ago—in prison. Life seemed a little dull. I think he would like to get out. He complained that I wouldn't let him have any newspapers. 'Why, I don't even know who is Prime Minister,' he said. 'The best way to keep posted in politics is to keep out of gaol,' I told him. 'You'll be glad to know that I'm leaving in a few months. You and I were never the best friends, but at least we were candid with each other.'"

Here I interrupted to put the question I had come to ask—permission to visit Gandhi in prison.

"Absolutely impossible," His Excellency cut me short. "The only way to gaol Gandhi is to bury him alive. If we allowed people to come here and make a fuss over him, he would become a martyr, and the gaol would be a

Mecca for the world. We didn't gaol Gandhi to put a crown of thorns on his head."

When I asked if there was any likelihood of Gandhi being released before his six years' term expires, he replied, emphatically :

"Not while I'm here. Of course, my term expires in December. They can do whatever they like with him after I go back to England."

After describing Mr. Gandhi's life in gaol, Mr. Pearson proceeds :

Mr. Gandhi's religious creed, as explained to me by his son, is based upon two things: truth and non-violence. He is willing to dispense with all forms and ceremonies which the world calls religion, and retain these two basic principles.

According to his son, Mr. Gandhi does not wish to be released from prison by the pressure of a popular demand, but only by the Government itself, when it has suffered a change of heart towards the Indian people. He will win his release by no promise to abstain from politics, but promises to devote the rest of his life to the liberation of his country.

Young India, 22-11-1923

APPENDIX VII

ANDREWS' STATEMENT ON GANDHIJI'S RELEASE

Mr. C. F. Andrews has communicated the following statement to the Associated Press concerning Mr. Gandhi :

I was present at the Sassoon Hospital this morning at about 7.30 a.m. and found Mahatma Gandhi very bright and cheerful after a good night's rest. While we were talking, Col. Maddock who has been in charge of the patient in hospital came in and announced to Mahatmaji news of his unconditional release and congratulated him upon it most heartily. He then read out to him words of the official message and said that it had come on Monday night by a special messenger. Therefore he had taken earliest opportunity of coming to him as he wished [him] to be the first man to hear news that he was now free. Mahatma Gandhi remained quiet for a few moments and then said to Col. Maddock with a smile, "I hope you will allow me to remain your patient and also your guest a little longer." Doctor laughed and told him that he trusted that his patient would go on obeying his orders as a doctor and that he himself might have very great pleasure and satisfaction of seeing him thoroughly restored to health. Later on in the morning, after dressing the wound, Col. Maddock gave warning that recovery of the patient which was going on so well might be seriously thrown back if any unnecessary excitement or tiredness was caused in the next few days by visits of those who wished to see him. Kindest thing in the world would be for everyone, except those who were

nursing him, to give him all the rest possible at this critical time in his recovery. It had to be remembered that the wound which had to be made while performing the operation was not fully healed and a little over-taxing of strength of the patient might throw recovery back. Next fortnight would be the time when every reserve of strength would be needed in order that the wound might be fully healed. Everything had gone well up to the present, but it was imperative that no unnecessary risks shall be incurred.

Mahatma Gandhi was removed by doctor's orders into another room with an outside verandah where he would be able to get the full benefit of the sunshine and open air. Telegrams began to pour in upon him from an early hour. The first telegram reached hospital very soon after Col. Maddock had left.

I would wish, if I may be permitted to do so, after all I have seen in the hospital concerning Mahatma Gandhi's health, to add my own urgent request to the warning given by the doctor, for while undoubtedly Mahatma Gandhi has recovered wonderfully hitherto, he is still in a very weak condition and it must be remembered that healing of the wound has still to go on and anything that in the slightest degree might bring about a relapse must be avoided. Every day of complete rest which he can now obtain, especially during the next fortnight, will mean an immense difference for the future. It would be the greatest kindness possible if those to whom his health is most precious would strictly observe doctor's instructions until the recovery has been fulfilled. It will also be quite impossible for Mahatmaji to grant interviews to Press correspondents. After writing out this statement, I read it over to Mahatma Gandhi himself at his own request, and he has passed it for the Press.

Young India, 7-2-1924

APPENDIX VIII

LETTER FROM DR. SATYAPAL

BHARAT BUILDINGS,
LAHORE,
February 23, 1924

MY DEAR MAHATMAJI,

Bande Mataram.

I beg to offer my sincere congratulations to you on your recovery. It is a matter of genuine delight for all of us that you have been restored to us for our guidance. May you enjoy a long lease of life is our fervent prayer.

You would have learned by this time that the Sikh Jatha which had gone to Jaiton for *Akhand Path* has been fired upon. There have been some casualties (the exact number of the killed and wounded is not yet known). The Working

Committee of the P.P.C.C. has arrived at the following decisions in this connection:

a. It has organized an Ambulance Corps and placed it at the disposal of the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabhandhak Committee.

b. It has written to the President, S.G.P. Committee, inquiring from him as to in what ways can our Committee help them. It has assured them that anything that we can do for them will be readily done.

May I request you to kindly favour me with your detailed views as to what we should do in this connection.

I trust that this letter finds you in good health.

Yours sincerely,
SATYAPAL
GENERAL SECRETARY

PS.

I have just now sent a telegram which I hope will have reached you before this.

From a photostat : S.N. 9915

APPENDIX IX

EXTRACT FROM K. P. KESAVA MENON'S LETTER

Kerala Provincial Congress Committee at its last meeting chalked out a definite programme of work with regard to untouchability this year. As you know, the conditions in Kerala are peculiar. Here the question is not only untouchability but unapproachability. We are now taking steps to see that public roads are also open to the unapproachables. There are ever so many roads in Kerala now used by Mahomedans, Christians and high-caste Hindus, but are not allowed to be used by the unapproachables such as *Ezuvas, Thiyyas* and *Pulayas*. Two weeks ago when I went to Vykom, a place of some importance in north Travancore, I appealed to the caste Hindus to allow members of the *Ezuva* and *Pulaya* communities to use the public road round the temple. I may mention that this road is maintained by public funds and is now being freely used by Christians, Mahomedans and caste Hindus. Though we arranged a procession consisting of *Pulayas* to pass this road on the morning of the 1st instant, we had to postpone it at the request of several local friends who wanted some time more to educate public opinion on the question. You may remember Mr. T. K. Madhavan, a leading member of the *Thiyya* community who interviewed you some three years ago while you were at Tinnevelly.[1] He has now joined the Congress and is whole-heartedly working with us for the removal of untouchability. We have fixed the 30th instant to

[1] *Vide* Vol. XXI, pp. 185-8.

take the procession along these roads. I need not assure you that it would be our endeavour to conduct it in the most orderly way possible. In the meanwhile, attempts are being made by lectures, distribution of leaflets, and personal interviews to bring the orthodox people to our side. A message from you would instil fresh courage in us.

The Hindu, 25-3-1924

APPENDIX X

LETTER FROM C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR

THE 'ARAMA',
SALEM,
(SOUTHERN INDIA),
March 23, 1924

MY DEAR MAHATMAJI,

I am so glad to receive your letter[1] today and I tender you my special thanks for reading the long statement during your present state of health. I fear that I have not expressed myself crisply and clearly in my statement. With your refreshing frankness, you must permit me to say that you have misunderstood it in vital parts. To show this clearly to you would require more space and time than I can well command now—I am not quite well and mostly in bed and on fluid diet under medical advice—or desirable to trouble you with, during your rest so necessary; but I shall take one or two instances.

You say, "It will also follow from your reasoning that swaraj will only have to be a grant from the British Parliament." This sentence has taken me by surprise. The whole tone and drift of my argument in this statement, as it had been previously throughout my life, is quite the contrary. I never was a party and could never be a party to the debasing view that we could secure our freedom only as a gift from any nation. In this very statement, I have clearly emphasized my strong difference from this view. I am sorry I did not number the paragraphs; but you can easily locate in it what I have said on this subject. You will note that I distinguish both our Moderates and Nationalists from those who have adopted your gospel of swaraj. I say there that the former have no 'sanction' for winning our freedom. You know what this word means in legal and political language. I also allude to the only two methods proclaimed authoritatively as means to gain our freedom, namely, a gift from England or by the employment of the sword and I afterwards said that we have invented a third method in the place of these two and that I call a sanction; namely, moral coercion of such a kind that England will not and dare not resist. Surely, in the face of this, it pains me to see you attri-

[1] This was dated March 19, 1924.

bute to me the idea of a spontaneous grant of swaraj from England. I can expand this argument, but I think it unnecessary. I shall console myself with an earnest appeal to you to read my statement again and also the cuttings which have been sent to Rev. Mr. C. F. Andrews a few days ago. You must ever remember that I am not a scholar and you must kindly gather my full meaning from scattered ideas not very logically arranged. As regards your statement that my swaraj is not consistent with our freedom to quit the British Empire when we choose, I can only refer you to the general tone and drift of these arguments as well as to my address at Nagpore, from all of which you can easily gather that my idea of swaraj implies freedom and ability to say to England "Get thee gone". You know well that the late French Prime Minister, Sir Wilfred Laurier, the leader of the Canadian Liberals, said that if Canada declared herself independent, England dared not fire a single gun. This view that the dominions of the British Empire are free to detach themselves at any time they liked is no longer a controversial policy but an accepted one.

On the subject of untouchability, you don't thoroughly understand me either. I merely wish to correct the erroneous and mischievous impression generally prevailing, especially abroad, that the doctrine of untouchability of Hindu outcastes and low castes was invented by the higher castes. I should like to know authority to the contrary if you disagree with me. On the other hand, this doctrine of untouchability, applied again to those unfortunate classes, is clearly and logically an expansion and even an exaggeration in a most uncharitable form of the doctrine of untouchability within caste and within family. In either case, the doctrine is based upon the idea that touch meant pollution and impurity. That's all I meant. I meant that both the ideas are the same in kind but different in degree. You perhaps are not aware that, in Southern India, we cannot go near a woman when she is unwell (periodically) be that woman our mother, sister, or daughter and, if inadvertently we did, we have to bathe and even change the sacred thread, exactly as the most orthodox do, when they touch or go too near a Pariah. This aspect was not thoroughly endorsed by Sri Shankaracharya. He said that bathing and changing thread would do if there was actual touch of the woman in such condition, but there was no pollution if one goes near her. You will thus see from all these that I never meant more than that a grievance, which really exists and which it is our sacred duty to remove, should not be exaggerated in nature or needlessly even in scope so that unnecessary bitterness of feeling is caused to the sufferers from a delusion that the doctrine was specially invented by the higher order of the Hindu society to degrade them on purpose. I hope you will agree with me that reform in this vital particular in our national corporate life is the more easy if there are no misconceptions on the part of either side and no exhibition of unseemly gesture on the part of the sufferers due to bitterness of feeling rising from erroneous diagnosis of the cause and exag-

gerated view of the grievance. When we meet again and when I shall have the good fortune to make you the more clearly and exactly see me as I am and as I have been, I hope to convince you that my views touching our duties no less than of our rights in order that we might take our proper place among the great families in this world are saner and sounder and more charitable than you appear to think, judging from your present letter.

My respects to Mrs. Gandhi, as well as my regards to Rev. Mr. C. F. Andrews and my kind remembrances to your children. Trusting that you are every day making good progress towards complete recovery of your health and with very kind regards,

I am,
Yours sincerely,
C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR

PS.

As regards the melancholy meanness of the business of the Congress at Cocanada in treating the so-called Compromise Resolution as a Non-co-operation Resolution, I would call your attention to the attitude of "Janmabhumi" of Masulipatam edited by Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya. This paper attacks it more than I do, and Sitaramayya is a genuine Congressman. You have not a purer and more loyal follower than he.

From a photostat: S.N. 8570

APPENDIX XI

(*A*) *LETTER FROM RAMANAND SANYASI*

BALDEV ASHRAM,
KHURJA (U.P.),
April 1, 1924

SHRIMAN MAHATMAJI,

I am in receipt of your letter dated the 28th instant. I regret I did not give you any particulars in my first letter.

(1) After 1921 episode the recruiting absolutely stopped. The trade was dull and there were huge stocks of Indian tea both in England and in India. With the present rise in the market and clearance of stocks, the planters began to feel need of more labour to recultivate the plantations which had been abandoned since 1921. The present recruiting started in last November. The information which I received was from a friend who is the District Engineer of Gurgaon District (Punjab). Then later on I received information from nearly six districts in U.P. and two districts of Punjab. It was in January that I issued a statement to the Press warning the people against consequences. The

Anglo-Indian agents who were in charge carefully avoided the districts from which they used to draw their labour before 1921 episode.

(2) The above covers your questions No. 2 and 3 also.

(3) The enquiry I want to make in the plantations is what are actual conditions prevailing there at present. Has their moral or otherwise their economic position increased than hitherto, and whether it will not be in the general interest of the country to check the flow of the labour to those districts if no improvement in any direction has taken place so that the morals and characters of further number may not become lax.

(4) No written conditions were offered to the would-be recruit as far as I have ascertained, but mainly they were as follows:

(i) Rs. thirty per mensem as wages both to the husband and wife, (ii) free quarters, wood for fuel and medical attendance. (iii) Free railway passage in case the recruit does not like the place. But you can yourself guess how difficult it is to return from tea garden districts if you are once there as a labourer. I quite accept your suggestion that enquiries should be made first through Assam Congress Committee before proceeding there. Accordingly I am writing a letter to the Committee the copy of which I am enclosing herewith. I am also enclosing herewith a letter in original which I only few days ago received from the Congress Committee, Biswan.

Sincerely yours,
RAMANAND SANYASI

From a photostat: S.N. 8643

(B) RAMANAND SANYASI'S LETTER TO CONGRESS COMMITTEE

BALDEV ASHRAM,
KHURJA (U.P.),
April 1, 1924

TO
THE SECRETARY
ASSAM PROVINCIAL CONGRESS COMMITTEE
GAUHATI

DEAR SIR,

In last November I received news from the Gurgaon District of Punjab that a certain Anglo-Indian gentleman was employing retired militarymen for recruiting labour for tea gardens, and that he was offering (i) Free railway passage to the gardens (ii) Rs. thirty monthly as wages both for husband and wife, (iii) together with free quarters and fuel wood. He was also willing to provide passage back and journey expenses should the recruit when at reaching there does not like to stay. Immediately after that I received news to the

same effect from Karnal, Ambala, Rohtak and Hissar districts of Punjab and from nearly every district of U.P. except Fezabad, Bellia, Gorakhpore and some other two or three districts which they perhaps avoided because these contained their ex-labourers. As I am quite familiar with the conditions prevailing in tea gardens and episode of 1921 came vividly before my eyes, I issued a statement to the Bengal, Punjab and U.P. Press in January last which you must have noticed and also I wrote to Bengal, U.P. and Punjab committees to take such action as conditions permit. At that time I did not write to you not because it was not necessary but because Assam had slipped from my memory. Now I wrote to Mahatma Gandhiji telling him of the thing and consulting him regarding the advisability or otherwise of proceeding to the tea gardens and looking at the thing. He has written to me to first make enquiries through you and then to consider what action should be taken in light of the same. Therefore I shall be obliged if you will kindly supply me the following information: (1) What are the actual conditions prevailing in plantations at present and has any improvement taken place regarding wages or morals since 1921 happenings. (2) Is fresh labour coming there, if so, from which districts mainly, and how they are being treated. (3) Do you think in the light of enquiries which you will make it is advisable to take measures against recruiting or should any body be deputed there to look after them.

Kindly forward a copy of reply to my this letter to Mahatmaji at Andheri, Bombay.

Sincerely yours,
RAMANAND SANYASI

(Note) I am forwarding a copy of this letter to Mahatmaji as per his orders.
RS

From a photostat: S.N. 8643

APPENDIX XII

C. F. ANDREWS' INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS

Mr. C. F. Andrews interviewed on the same subject stated that he had been present with Mr. Gandhi through the preliminary negotiations with General Smuts, which had led up to the Smuts-Gandhi Settlement of July 1914. He had himself actually witnessed the signing of the original draft agreement. Every word had been carefully discussed and fully explained on both sides. General Smuts had said, "This time let there be no misunderstanding or mental reservation. Let all the cards be laid on the table." Mr. Gandhi had acted exactly in accordance with that spirit. He had made three points as plain as possible:

(1) That the Settlement should contain no racial taint.

(2) That all existing rights vested in the community, small as they were, should be secured.

(3) That any remaining disabilities might be brought forward for settlement in the future.

This third point was established in a letter to the Secretary of the Minister of the Interior, dated June 16, 1914. The first point was emphasized again and again in Mr. Gandhi's farewell speeches which were cabled all over the world. He said, for instance, at Johannesburg: "The Settlement reached establishes the principle that the legislation can never contain a racial taint. It is a vindication of this principle of the British constitution. I do not think there is any room left for misunderstanding. While the Settlement is final in the sense that it closes the great struggle, it is not final in the sense that it gives the Indians all they are entitled to. These further restrictions will have to be removed."[1]

The most important statement which may be regarded the final word on the subject from Mr. Gandhi was his message to Reuter on the eve of his departure from South Africa. It contained the following significant passage: "The promise made by General Smuts to administer the existing law justly with due regard to vested rights gives the Indian community breathing time. But these laws are in themselves defective, and can be, as they have been, turned into engines of oppression and instruments by indirect means to drive the Indian population out of South Africa. The concession to popular prejudice, by which we have reconciled ourselves to the almost total prohibition of fresh Indian Immigration and the deprivation of all political power, is the utmost that could be expected from us. These two things being assured, I submit we are entitled to full rights of trade, inter-provincial migration and ownership of landed property being restored to us in the not distant future."[2]

These passages, Mr. Andrews stated, made perfectly evident that Mr. Gandhi went away from South Africa with a Settlement that was precisely defined. On the understanding that immigration would be prohibited, General Smuts had agreed that no racial bar should be raised and that all existing vested rights should be secured. He also agreed that the Indian community would be free in the future to seek to remove further disabilities such as the restriction of inter-provincial migration.

Mr. Andrews concluded by stating that he could not at all understand Mr. Duncan's interpretation, and that Mr. Gandhi's prophetic words appeared to be coming true; for the Union Government appeared to be now engaged in turning its laws into "engines of oppression and instruments by indirect means to drive the Indian population out of South Africa."

The Hindu, 7-4-1924

[1] *Vide* Vol. XII, p. 47
[2] ibid., p. 501

APPENDIX XIII

(*A*) *MAHOMED ALI'S LETTER TO SWAMI SHRADDHANAND*

RESPECTED SWAMI MAHARAJ,

I am sorry I could not write to you yesterday regarding the matter referred to by you, as per promise, as I had gone out to pay a visit to H.H. the Nawab Sahib of Rampur and had to remain there from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. I have just now seen in the *Tej* a requisition by four of your Arya friends that I should resign from the Congress. I could not help feeling amused at it, although I confess it grieved me also. I am aware that some persons of this type have been engaged in this sort of activity for some time past, but I was led to think that, after the reply that I had given to a question addressed to me at a public meeting in Lucknow, which appealed so much to a Hindu gentleman present that he shouted out in his enthusiasm that 22 crores of Hindus were ready to stand or fall by me, these gentlemen would not venture to pursue their line of activity any further. I now realize how vain this expectation was. Although the manner in which the controversy is conducted at present is such as to render it absolutely unnecessary on my part to give a single word in reply, still as I have already promised to explain the matter fully, I beg to make the following statement as desired by you:

The fact is as I had stated verbally to you. Even then, some Mussalman friends have been constantly flinging at me the charge of being a worshipper of Hindus and a Gandhi-worshipper. The real object of these gentlemen was to alienate from me the Mussalman community, the Khilafat Committee and the Congress, by representing that I had become a follower of Mahatma Gandhi in my religious principles. I had, therefore, on several occasions plainly declared that in the matter of religion, I professed the same belief as any other true Mussalman, and as such I claimed to be a follower of the Prophet Mahomed (on him be peace) and not of Gandhiji. And further that since I hold Islam to be the highest gift of God, therefore, I was impelled by the love I bear towards Mahatmaji to pray to God that He might illumine his soul with the true light of Islam. I wish, however, to emphatically declare that I hold that today neither the representatives of Islam nor of the Hindu, Jewish, Nazarene or Parsi faith can present another instance of such high character and moral worth as Gandhiji and that is the reason why I hold him in such high reverence and affection. I deeply revere my own mother, and if contentment and gratefulness under all circumstances be the true meaning of Islam, I claim there is no person, howsoever well-versed in religion, who has understood it better than she. Similarly, I regard Maulana Abdul Bari as my religious guide. His loving kindness holds me in bondage. I deeply admire his sincerity of heart. But in spite of all this, I make bold to say that

I have not yet found any person who in actual character is entitled to a higher place than Mahatma Gandhi.

But between belief and actual character there is a wide difference. As a follower of Islam I am bound to regard the creed of Islam as superior to that professed by the followers of any non-Islamic religion. And in this sense the creed of even a fallen and degraded Mussalman is entitled to a higher place than that of any other non-Muslim irrespective of his high character, even though the person in question be Mahatma Gandhi himself.

At Lucknow, when just before the commencement of my speech, some one placed a printed copy of the question in reference in my hand for reply (copies of which had also been freely distributed among the audience) I had stated that I did not want to answer any such questions, as I did not consider that anyone, unless he could prove that he bore a greater affection towards Mahatmaji than I did, was entitled to charge me with having reviled him. It was only when I was told that the point at issue was not that I had reviled Mahatmaji, but that I had reviled the Hindu religion, that I gave the above-stated reply. A report of my speech had appeared in the *Hamdam* at that time, i.e., about one month back. I had said further therein that every Christian believed that a Christian, however degraded or fallen, was entitled to a higher place in regard to the matter of belief as contra-distinguished from actual character than any Mussalman or Jew, irrespective of his high character and the same was the case with Hindus or followers of any other religion. My reply proved so satisfactory that, as I have already mentioned, a Hindu friend shouted out that 22 crores of Hindus were prepared to stand by me and several Hindu members of the audience acclaimed it with cries of *Bande Mataram*, *Allah-o-Akbar*, while the persons who had brought the printed copies of the question were completely silenced. The beauty is that one of the friends who have now come forward with a requisition demanding my resignation had quite recently sent a warm invitation to attend a public meeting at Dehra Dun.

I cannot under these circumstances possibly retire from any of my activities as a result of what these gentlemen might say or think. Besides, the matter is well within the jurisdiction of the Congress. I wish, however, to state here, and I hope you will bear me out in my statement, that if I, although I am the meanest and the most insignificant among the followers of Islam, am to be regarded by these gentlemen as an enemy of Hindu-Muslim unity and a reviler of Mahatmaji and the religious principles which he professes, then I am afraid they will not find a single Mussalman who will completely satisfy them.

I beg to state once more that were I not bound by my promise to you, this letter might not have been written at all as I am most unwilling to add one more to the numberless controversies that are raging in the country at present. As for the friends who have thought fit to raise such an unpleasant

controversy at a time when the death of my daughter and the dangerous illness of a brother and mother have rendered me physically unfit to engage in any such controversy, I think it best to leave them to be judged by their own conscience. I again beg to record my thanks to you for your condolence and with these words take my leave. If you write anything to the Press in this connection, you may publish this letter as it is.

Yours, etc.,
MAHOMED ALI

Young India, 10-4-1924

(*B*) *MAHOMED ALI'S LETTER TO THE EDITOR, "TEJ"*

DEAR SIR,

There was one sentence in Swamiji Maharaj's letter which is liable to give the impression that I do not consider right action as essential for salvation. That is not at all my belief nor that of any other Mussalman. The essential conditions for salvation are faith, purity of action, persuading others to do good and to warn them against evil and to submit to all consequences of your actions with patience. I hold that a non-Moslem is perfectly entitled to reward for his good actions even as a Mussalman is liable to be punished for his evil deeds. The point at issue was not at all as to the essential conditions for salvation, but only regarding the distinction between Belief and Conduct. That is the reason why I gave to Mahatmaji the highest place among all the Mussalmans that I know of so far as actual character was concerned. But to consider one's creed as superior to that of every non-Muslim is the duty of a Mussalman. By stating this I refuted the charge of Gandhi-worship levelled against me and that was precisely my object and not to hurt the feelings of my Hindu brethren or to revile Mahatma Gandhi. If any one can have reason to complain, it is my own co-religionists, none of whom I considered to be worthy of being ranked with Mahatma Gandhi in excellence of character.

MAHOMED ALI

Young India, 10-4-1924

APPENDIX XIV

(A) *MOTILAL NEHRU'S NOTE ON COUNCIL-ENTRY*

I have read and re-read Mahatmaji's draft with all the attention I am capable of and have allowed a whole week to elapse since it was handed to me. I have also had the advantage in this interval of discussing the draft with Mahatmaji for which he was good enough to give me a long sitting of over three hours. I have considered the observations made by Mahatmaji in the course of that discussion with anxious care. This long deliberation has, I am sorry to say, resulted only in confirming the opinion I formed 18 months ago.

I agree that the difference between Mahatmaji and me is in some respects one of principle and not of mere detail. Indeed, on closer examination, I have come to think that it goes deeper and lies more in the theory on which the principle is based than in the principle itself. But with all that I am persuaded to believe that it does not and ought not to be allowed to affect the application of the principle in practice. Let us take "non-violence" and "non-co-operation" separately.

(1) "Non-violence".—Mahatmaji's "non-violence" is conceived on a very much higher plane than what I have agreed to adopt owing to the compelling necessity of the case. The doctrine of ahimsa with all its implications and logical deductions has not been and cannot be adopted by the Congress which professes to include men of all religions and creeds in the world within its fold. Islam does not recognize it as an invariable and inflexible rule of life and there are many Hindu castes and sects with which the judicious use of violence is an accepted article of faith. Whilst Mahatmaji would not resort to violence under any circumstances whatever in thought, word or deed, many true Congressmen would, under certain conditions, consider it their highest duty to resort to actual physical violence. In fact, I hold that it would be doing violence to the highest and noblest feelings implanted in man if we ruled out violence in any shape or form under all conceivable circumstances. If I see a bully ill-treating or assaulting a person weaker than himself, I would not merely interpose my body between the assailant and the victim and thus enable him to have two victims instead of one, but try to knock him down and thus save both his victim and myself. Again if I were assaulted, I would defend myself, if necessary, by inflicting violence on my assailant and that violence may under certain circumstances extend even to the causing of the assailant's death. I need not give other illustrations of a similar nature which can easily be conceived. As for non-violence in thought, it is obvious that one who is prepared to resort to actual violence on certain occasions cannot be entirely free from the thought of it. By joining the movement of non-violent non-co-

operation all I have undertaken to do is, to refrain from inflicting or even contemplating violence of any kind in carrying out the programme of non-co-operation against the Government. This is what I take Mahatmaji to mean, when he speaks of "non-violence in its full sense, but restricted as to the cause for which it was taken". If a Government official chooses to behave to me like the bully of my illustration in matters wholly unconnected with the Congress programme, he shall receive exactly the same treatment as I would give to the bully. The doctrine of non-violence has, so far as I am concerned, a limited application for the very special purpose for which I have adopted it.

Mahatmaji says entry into the Councils is "tantamount to participation in violence". I understand this to refer to the fact that the Councils are established by a Government which is based on violence. I maintain that no one living under such a Government can help participating in violence in that sense. The very act of living and adopting the most essential means of sustaining life under such a Government would be "tantamount to participation in violence". Whether or not going into the Councils is a more direct participation in violence than merely living under a Government based on violence is only a question of degree and depends on the object with which one goes into the Councils.

Mahatmaji has been pleased to doubt the accuracy of the statement that "nobody takes the extreme view of non-violence that I do, and that most Congressmen confine the definition of non-violence to mere abstention from causing physical hurt to the opponent". There may be some who take the extreme view in theory, but I do not know a single follower of Mahatmaji who acts upon it. It is true that non-violence even in the limited sense that I give to it must relate both to word and deed and cannot be confined to abstention from causing physical hurt only. But non-violence in thought must be ruled out entirely as impracticable. Otherwise, we shall be weaving a cobweb of casuistry around us from which it would be impossible to extricate ourselves.

(2) Non-co-operation.—I confess my inability to see any trace of non-co-operation in the present-day activities of the Congress. They may possibly lead to non-co-operation at some future date, but can by no stretch of imagination be taken to constitute non-co-operation. We have only the Bardoli programme before us, but there is nothing in it which can in any sense amount to actual non-co-operation with the Government. Mahatmaji says that the triple boycott has not failed because the lawyers have lost their prestige, the parents have lost faith in Government school education, and the Councils have lost their glamour. I admit all that and more for, in my opinion, the number of things lost can easily be multiplied. But the question is whether this has been due to the practice of the boycott or is the result of Mahatmaji's teachings. And does it not show a far sadder state of things than that which existed before these boycotts were conceived? The number of lawyers and of the school-going population has considerably increased and that of the Councillors remains the same. The only difference is that, while before 1920 people took

to the profession of law, sent their children to Government schools and entered the Councils honestly believing that they were doing the right thing, they did the same in 1921-23 with the knowledge and belief that they were doing a great wrong not only to themselves but to the whole nation. Has this improved the standard of public morality? The triple boycott has in my humble judgment only shown that the preaching of high ideals which the people are not ready to follow can only result in positive harm. The honest thing to do is to admit failure and frankly give up the triple boycott. The Swarajists would have done it had it not been for their belief that they had no chance of success with the masses against Mahatmaji's teachings. The next best thing they could do was to introduce a real element of non-co-operation in the Councils. In this there can be no question that they have eminently succeeded.

I shall now take the liberty to examine the case made out by Mahatmaji against Council-entry. He makes a grave and serious charge against Swarajists by saying that "the entry into the Legislative bodies has retarded the progress towards swaraj". I respectfully but emphatically join issue and maintain that exactly the contrary has been the case. What has actually happened is that the Assembly has laid a foundation for the people's swaraj broad-based on their free will and choice. Whether the demand made by the Assembly will be conceded or not is immaterial. Whether any actual progress towards swaraj through the Councils is possible or not is equally beside the point. But how any action taken in the Assembly or the Provincial Councils has actually "retarded the progress towards swaraj" simply beats my comprehension. I should have thought that the Swarajists have at least shown to a doubting world that they are a determined set of men who will have nothing short of swaraj. The positive value of this demonstration may perhaps be doubted, but it is hardly fair to attribute a negative value to it.

I will now deal with the reasons given by Mahatmaji categorically.

(a) Council-entry is "*tantamount to taking part directly or indirectly in the present system of Government*". There are innumerable things we do every day of our lives by which we take part directly or indirectly in the present system of Government. The objection, however, seems to be based on the assumption that the Legislative bodies are "a *chief part* of the machinery designed to *sustain* that system". It would be more accurate to say that the Legislative bodies are merely an *ornamental* part of the machinery designed *to justify* the existing system. The truth is that the Government is absolutely independent of the Legislative bodies, which do not really sustain the system but are designed to conceal the fraud which the Government is practising on the world. The Swarajists have entered the Councils to expose this fraud not by taking part in it, but by refusing to take such part. I am at a loss to reconcile this dictum of Mahatmaji with his acquiescence in Congressmen taking part in the Municipal Councils. A cursory perusal of the various Municipal Acts in force in this country will show that these bodies are a most essential part of the adminis-

tration and can only be carried on by complete co-operation with the Government in all important matters. They nullify the boycott of schools, for almost every Municipality applies for and obtains handsome grants from the public revenues to run the schools. They bring about the anomaly of Congressmen having to carry out the policy of Ministers appointed under the Government of India Act and submitting the former to the control of the latter. There are many other things which do not merely smell of co-operation but amount to direct participation in the system of Government.

(b) "Obstruction." This is a very much misused and misapplied word, but I admit that our Swarajist nostrils are not trained enough to smell violence in it, and fail to see how the Swarajist programme can possibly have a stronger smell of violence than the breaking of the Criminal Law Amendment Act and the various forms of picketing and hartals authorized by the Congress. I take Civil Disobedience itself to be the highest form of obstruction. But let us not lay undue stress on words and consider what the Swarajists have actually done. They have carried out the programme to the full in C.P. Let us see what has been done there. The first step taken was to pass a vote of "No confidence" in the Ministers. That really meant no confidence in the system which brought Ministers into existence and that was made perfectly clear in the speeches made in support of the motion. The Government did not dismiss the Ministers as it should have done after this vote. The next step taken was to refuse the salaries of the Ministers, but they continued to stick to their offices and introduce measures relating to their departments. These measures were all rejected, because the Council refused to recognize the Ministers after the vote of "No Confidence" and the refusal of their salaries. Then came the budget on which the Council had no effective control. It was thrown out on the express ground that the Council would be no party to the expenditure of public revenues in the raising of which it had no voice and in the spending of which it had no control. Some other Bills were thrown out on similar grounds. This is all that has happened. I invite an examination of each of these acts of the Swarajists on its own merit and ask if any objection can be taken to any one of them on the highest moral and ethical grounds. The same acts can be and have been described as acts of obstruction, acts of destruction, and acts of wrecking from various points of view. But nothing turns upon mere phrases. What you have to look to is the substance and I claim that what was done in the C.P. in substance was non-co-operation with a Government which paid no heed to the popular will. The same applies to the acts of the Swarajists in the Assembly and the Bengal Council.

(c) "Constructive Programme." I could not understand what this objection meant, but Mahatmaji has since explained to me that all that it meant was that the time and energy given to the question of Council-entry was so much time and energy taken away from the constructive programme. So far as that goes it applies only to the No-changers, for the Swarajists were practically

expelled from the Congress Executive and had no control on the organizations of the various departments of the constructive programme. The only alternatives to Council-entry open to them were, either to go into retirement or start independent organizations to carry on the constructive programme, neither of which would have helped the cause.

(d) "Entry is premature." I am afraid I do not quite grasp this objection. If it means that we should have waited till we got swaraj it begs the whole question. As for a "constant, almost irresistible temptation to depart from truthfulness and non-violence in the atmosphere of the Councils", all I can say is that I have perceived no difference in the Council atmosphere from that outside the Councils. The "strain" on discipline will certainly not be more prolonged in the Councils than it is sure to be in the long expectation of Civil Disobedience.

(e) "Khilafat and Punjab causes." Apart from the fact that these causes are practically dead, I do not see what special connection there is between them and the question of entry into the Councils.

The above are the principal reasons given by Mahatmaji against the entry of Congressmen into the Councils. A few other points are mentioned in passing in the course of the general remarks that follow the main reasons. After acknowledging the "brilliant victories of the Swarajists", Mahatmaji proceeds to point out that all that the Swarajists have done could be achieved "before non-co-operation", that we could, "not merely get a Gandhi released, but many Hasrat Mohanis and all Punjab prisoners" by "fairly directed agitation" and that there is not "much in the khaddar demonstration, or in keeping so many Moderates out". "The machinery of the Government goes on unchecked with or without the Moderates and in spite of obstruction." In adopting this line of argument, Mahatmaji has done less than justice to himself. The Swarajists have never taken any credit for the release of Mahatmaji or the demonstration of khaddar, but they have certainly succeeded in keeping the Moderates out which the boycott of Councils under Mahatmaji's programme could not achieve. I agree that the real machinery of the Government goes on unchecked, but we claim that we have taken out the false and ornamental parts of the machinery and exposed its true character to the world. If it was right to send thirty thousand of our workers to gaol simply to establish the fact that the visit of the Prince of Wales was forced upon a discontented people, it was certainly worth something to expose the continuing fraud practised day to day in in the name of the representatives of the people.

The unkindest cut of all is contained in the sentence: "It was not to be expected that the Swarajists could be convinced by any argument." All I can say is that the Swarajists in all humility claim to exercise their own judgment and have not yet heard anything that could carry conviction to them.

After this Mahatmaji makes one or two more observations which must be noticed. He says, "I would enter the Councils only if I could believe that

I could make use of them for the advancement of the country. I must therefore have faith in the machinery and those in charge of it. I cannot be part of the machinery and still want to destroy it." I venture to submit that this argument suffers from the weakness of all arguments based on analogies and metaphors. I do not see why one must have faith in those whom one finds in charge of machinery, if it can be worked better by others. I should have thought that the most perfect machinery could be so hopelessly mismanaged by those in charge as to require their immediate removal. There can be no harm in taking over a rickety old machine from the hands of mechanics bent on evil, and try to run it after proper repairs for the benefit of those in whose interest it ought to be worked. We have not become parts of the machinery in order to destroy it. There are certain imported parts of the machine which destroy the goods in the process of manufacture. We are for the present taking out those parts and substituting ourselves for them, hoping eventually to have an entirely new machine of pure swadeshi make to be run by the people for the people.

I now come to that part of the draft note where Mahatmaji, looking upon Council-entry as a settled fact, answers the question: "What is to be done now?" As was to be expected, he has given the only answer which the resolutions of the Delhi and Cocanada Congress could admit of. But I venture to think that something more than a mere interpretation of those resolutions is necessary. The most important point to be considered is what is to be the position of the Swarajists in the general Congress movement. Is it to be somewhat similar to that assigned by Mahatmaji to practising lawyers who were compared to cobblers and declared debarred from taking an active part in the Counsels of the Congress and from being appointed on its Executive? If that is the idea, Swarajists must deprive themselves of the honour of remaining under the distinguished leadership of Mahatmaji and, either retire from public life or look for "fresh fields and pastures new". But if that is not the idea, I believe it is yet possible to work together for the common cause. Certain proposals have occurred to me in this connection and I put them in the order in which they appeal to me.

1. A new programme of work in the Councils may be framed by the Congress with the object of helping the outside activities of the Congress in the direction of "construction" and "non-co-operation". The programme so framed will then stand in place of a mandate from the country which every Swarajist would be bound to carry out and all Congressmen bound to support. In this case, all distinction between Swarajists and Non-Swarajists or Pro-changers and No-changers will disappear, but while all will act together, generally such Congressmen will only go into the Councils as have no objection to do so. Funds required for Council propaganda will be granted by the vote of the Working Committee subject to the control of the All-India Committee exactly in the same manner as for other Congress purposes, and with due regard to the rela-

tive importance of the various heads of Congress expenditure. It will be permissible to donors to the Tilak Swaraj Fund to earmark their contribution for Councils if they choose.

2. A separate section or department of the Congress called the Councils Section or department may be opened and placed in sole charge and direction of the Swarajists. The latter will take part in the general activities of the Congress outside the Councils and help those activities in the Councils as desired by the Congress. In this case also, there will be some Swarajists on the General Executive, but no financial help will be given from the Tilak Swaraj Fund *not* earmarked for the Councils. The difference between the first proposal and this is that, while in the former case the Congress will lay down the whole programme for the Councils, in the latter case it will only call upon the Swarajists to take particular steps such as those referred to by Mahatmaji at the end of his draft, viz., the propagation of khaddar and the abolition of drink revenue.

3. To carry on as now under the Delhi and Cocanada resolutions without any disqualification attaching to Swarajists as such. In this case Swarajists will frame and carry out their own policy without reference to the Congress and will collect their own funds and the Congress will not in any way interfere with them. The Swarajya Party will do all it can to carry out the constructive programme of the Congress and the Congress will help and support that action.

From a typed photostat: S.N. 8716

(B) *EXTRACT FROM C. R. DAS'S LETTER*

CALCUTTA,
April 18, 1924

Motilal has sent me a draft containing your views on the Council-entry question. I am very anxious to discuss one or two points raised in it by you. You may be right in your view on the question of non-co-operation if non-co-operation is construed very strictly. But as it is I do not see eye to eye with you on the question of non-violence. I believe in non-violence as a principle and it is very unfortunate that doctors will not allow me to go and discuss the whole matter with you. I am dictating this letter under very great difficulty. Will it be very inconvenient if you postpone the publication of your views till I am well enough to see you? It may sound presumptuous but I feel that, if the Delhi compromise is suddenly upset, the whole country will be engaged again in philosophical discussions which will materially interfere with the larger work. I have to be here till the 23rd for medical treatment and after that the proposal is that I should go to Darjeeling and remain there at least a month.

From a photostat: S.N. 8740

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CHRONOLOGY

(*March 4, 1922 — May 7, 1924*)

1922

March 4 : Gandhiji in Ahmedabad.

March 5 : In the afternoon attended Gujarat Provincial Congress Committee meeting presided over by Vallabhbhai Patel.

March 8 : Left Ahmedabad for Ajmer by evening train.

March 9 : Attended Ulemas' Conference at Ajmer.
Left Ajmer for Ahmedabad.
Lajpat Rai sentenced to one year's rigorous imprisonment for breaking ban on addressing public meetings.
Resignation of Montagu, Secretary of State for India, accepted.

March 10 : Gandhiji reached Ahmedabad in the afternoon.
Arrested at 10 p.m. and taken to Sabarmati Jail.

March 11 : Charged with promoting disaffection against Government through his writings in *Young India* before Assistant Magistrate; committed to Sessions. Exhorted Ashram people in parting words to propagate peace and harmony among all communities. Message to country summed up in one word: 'khaddar'.

Before *March 18* : Lloyd George, British Prime Minister, said in Commons that British supremacy had to be maintained, and repeated that goal of British policy in India was responsible Government, as envisaged in Preamble of the Government of India Act, 1919, but not of the Dominion type.

March 18 : Gandhiji, in jail, gave interview to *Manchester Guardian* on non-co-operation.
Tried by Sessions Court at Circuit House, Shahibagh, sentenced to six years' imprisonment; Shankerlal Banker to one year.

March 20 : At midnight Gandhiji taken from Sabarmati Jail to Yeravda Prison by special train.

March 21 : Arrived at Yeravda Prison at 5.30 p.m.

March 22 : Fasted on being deprived of spinning-wheel, which was restored in the evening.

March 23 : Shuaib Qureshi took over as Editor of *Young India*.

April 1 : Gandhiji visited by C. Rajagopalachari.

April 22 : Had talk with Gangadharrao Deshpande, journalist and Congress leader of Karnatak.

May 6 : Gandhiji informed by Government that his letter to Hakim Ajmal Khan could not be forwarded.

May 12 : Wrote to Hakimji that, in view of Government's action in withholding his last letter, he would stop the quarterly communication permitted by jail rules.

June 1 : C. Rajagopalachari took over editorship of *Young India*.

July 1 : Gandhiji had visit from Maganlal Gandhi.

July 2 : Kasturba, Manilal, Devdas and Mathuradas Trikumji called on Gandhiji.

September 13 : Gandhiji commenced week's silence.

September 20 : Went on one week's silence for the second time.

October 4 : Kasturba, Jamnalal, Ramdas, Punjabhai and Kishorelal called on Gandhiji.

November 11 : A.I.C.C. at Calcutta passed Civil Disobedience resolution.

1923

January 27 : Kasturba visited Gandhiji.

February 10 : Mulshi Peta satyagrahis in Yeravda Prison flogged for refusing to work.
Gandhiji sought Jail Superintendent's permission to meet Mulshi Peta prisoners.

April 16 : Devdas met Gandhiji.

April 17 : Shankerlal Banker released.

April 21 : Gandhiji indisposed with severe pain in stomach.

May 1 : Wrote to Jail Superintendent refusing special class treatment denied to other prisoners.

May 5 : Examined by Col. Maddock, Surgeon-General.

May 15 : Examined again by Col. Maddock. Visited by Indulal Yagnik.

May 18 : Transferred to European Ward; Kasturba and others called.

June 27 : Mulshi Peta satyagrahis commenced fast.

June 29 : Approached Jail Superintendent for permission to see Mulshi Peta prisoners on their being flogged again. Discussed matter with Col. Dalziel.

July 2 : In great physical pain at night.

July 9 : Communicated to Jail Superintendent his decision to fast since his offer to meet Mulshi Peta satyagrahis had been rejected.

July 10 : Agreed to postpone fast for 48 hours on Superintendent's request.

July 11 : Received Governor's message through Griffiths.

July 12 : Informed by Griffiths that he would be allowed to meet Mulshi Peta satyagrahis and that flogging would be resorted to only when prisoners attacked jail officials. Persuaded satyagrahis to give up fast.

July 16 : Kasturba and others met Gandhiji.

August 13 : Discussed with Governor, Sir George Lloyd, classification of prisoners.

September 10 : Devdas, Narandas, and others called on Gandhiji.

October 10 : Kasturba, Avantikabai, Jamnalal and Savatibai saw Gandhiji.

November 26 : Started writing *The History of Satyagraha in South Africa* in Gujarati.

December 17 : Visited by Kasturba, Mathuradas and Ramdas.

December 18 : Ramabai Ranade met Gandhiji.

1924

January 2 : Cocanada session of Indian National Congress concluded.

January 5 : C. R. Das elected member of Bengal Legislative Council.

January 8 : Gandhiji had severe stomach pain, passed restless night.

January 12 : Visited by Srinivasa Sastri in Sassoon Hospital. Operated on by Col. Maddock for appendicitis.

January 14 : Conveyed thanks to countrymen through Dr. Phatak for deep affection shown him during critical period of health.

January 19 : Gave interview to *The Bombay Chronicle*.

February 2 : In interview to Dilip Kumar Roy, expressed views on music.

February 4 : Order of unconditional release of Gandhiji issued.

Before *February 5* : Interviewed by editor of *Yug Dharma*, said he contemplated writing autobiography.

February 5 : Release order conveyed at 8 a.m., but continued to remain in Sassoon Hospital.

After *February 5* : Gave Devdas answers to questions on swaraj from Drew Pearson.

On or before *February 6* : Sent message to Gujarat Vidyapith that his release was no matter for rejoicing but rather for humility.

Before *February 7* : In interview to *The Bombay Chronicle*, expressed grief that his release was based on grounds of health.

February 7 : Issued message to nation through Congress President that he was not happy over release.

February 12 : Requested Mahomed Yakub to desist from moving Assembly resolution recommending award of Nobel Peace Prize to him.

February 14 : Issued statement on Class Areas Bill.

February 25 : Issued statement on Jaiton firing.

February 28 : Gave interview to Sind deputation consisting of Jairamdas Doulatram, Kazi Abdul-Rehman, Seth Isserdas and R. K. Sidhwa.

March 1 : Sent message of sympathy to Poona citizens' meeting, held to protest against ban on Horniman's return to India.

March 4 : Issued statement on Akali Movement.

On or before *March 7* : In message to Delhi Provincial Political Conference, advised promotion of Hindu-Muslim unity.

March 9 : Interviewed by Associated Press on his talks with Akali deputation.

March 10 : Addressed students of B. J. Medical School, Poona. Left Sassoon Hospital; entrained at night for Bombay.

March 11 : Arrived in Bombay. Stayed at Narottam Morarji's bungalow at Juhu for convalescence.

March 15 : Issued statement on Potti Sriramulu's fast for Harijan entry to temples.

March 17 : Resumed practice of observing silence every Monday.

March 19 : Sent message to Vykom satyagrahis.

March 20 : Issued statement on Government's opium policy.

March 21 : Addressed party of students and teachers from Bombay Rashtriya Shala.

March 23 : Issued second statement on Class Areas Bill.

March 29 : Had discussions regarding "No-changers' and Swarajists with Madan Mohan Malaviya, Lajpat Rai and Motilal Nehru.

Before *March 30* : Addressed teachers, members of Managing Committee and guardians of pupils of National School at Vile Parle.

April 2 : Wrote preface to *Satyagraha in South Africa*.

April 3 : Resumed editorship of *Young India*. Had interview with Dr. Kitchlew.

April 4 : Held talks with Madan Mohan Malaviya, Motilal Nehru and Hakim Ajmal Khan on Hindu-Muslim unity.

April 6 : Resumed editorship of *Navajivan*.
Issued third statement on Class Areas Bill.

April 11 : Prepared draft statement in connection with Council-entry.

April 13 : Sent Motilal Nehru copy of draft statement on Council-entry.

April 15 : Expressed views on Vykom Satyagraha in interview to *The Hindu*.

April 23 : Attended Working Committee meeting.
Srinivasa Sastri called on Gandhiji.

April 24 : In interview to *The Daily Express*, gave his views on swaraj.

May 1 : Appealed for Hindu help to starving Moplahs.

Before *May 4* : Issued statement on Kathiawar Political Conference.

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444	Item 345, date line	[*April 16, 1924*]	[April 9, 1924][1] The item should be read after item 312.

[1] The letter appears to have been written on April 9, the Wednesday preceding the publication of the article "Satyagraha and Caste Reform", 13-4-1924.